THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF AESTHETICS

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IS PHILOSOPHY A FORM OF LITERATURE?*

William Charlton

PHILOSOPHERS GENERALLY are characterized by a preoccupation with their terms of reference—what, they keep asking, is philosophy about?—and philosophical aestheticians have displayed this characteristic in recent years by debating what it is that holds the field of aesthetics together. Two extreme positions can be distinguished. One is that there is some single thing which is common and peculiar to all aesthetic experience (or perhaps to all objects of aesthetic experience or all aesthetic judgements); this is what makes them all aesthetic, all objects of a single study, and if anything else is the business of the aesthetician that will be because it is related in some way to this single thing. The other position is that there is nothing common and peculiar to all aesthetic experiences, judgements or objects: the field of aesthetics is held together by many different but interesecting chains of resemblances and relationships. To use current terms of art, the first position is that the word 'aesthetic' has focal meaning while the second is that it is applied on grounds of family resemblance. Now I incline to the second position, but I shall not offer a formal defence of it here. Instead I shall try to illustrate it by discussing a particular question which might properly be put to the aesthetician: 'Is philosophy a form of literature?' I hope, naturally, that my answer to this question will be thought judicious. But I hope still more that my method of reaching it will be found satisfactory, since if it is I shall have given ostensive proof of the fruitfulness of the family resemblance view. The arguments I shall advance and try to answer will be of the varied and piecemeal type which on that view would be appropriate.

First, however, let me refine the question. By philosophy I mean neither formal logic nor random reflections on life by wise men such as Montaigne and Bacon, but academic philosophy such as is studied and attempted in modern universities. As for forms of literature,

* This paper was read at a meeting of The British Society of Aesthetics in June, 1973.

I take it that epic and lyric poetry, tragedy and comedy, the novel and the literary essay are forms of literature, and that a literary work of any such form is as such an object of aesthetic appraisal. To judge or enjoy a lyric poem as a lyric poem or a novel as a novel is to judge or enjoy it aesthetically. A good tragedy is as such aesthetically good. To ask, then, whether philosophy is a form of literature is to ask whether a work of academic philosophy is as such an object of aesthetic appraisal, whether there is at least a logical presumption that what is good as philosophy will have aesthetic merit.

It might be held that a work of philosophy is an object of aesthetic appraisal because a philosophical theory can have a certain formal beauty. It can be elegant and economical; widely different problems can be related illuminatingly; large areas of intellectual morass can be drained by a single system and disconnected speculative gropings reduced to order. An argument along these lines would suggest that philosophical achievements can be regarded as works of art, but not necessarily as works of literary art: they would have analogies with mathematical or scientific theories. I shall confine myself here to analogies with literature, but it is worth saying that on the family resemblance view a thing can be an object of aesthetic interest not only by being closely related to other objects of a single kind but also by being loosely related to other objects of several different kinds.

I think that many people, having in view the dry and indigestible character of much academic philosophy, would be inclined to say that philosophy is not as such a form of literature. Works of philosophy may often contain passages of literary merit, but these should be regarded as mere external embellishment, a display of verbal fireworks to attract an audience, a gilding of the philosophic pill. The intuitive appeal of this view is so strong that it hardly needs arguments to support it, but I shall consider briefly a couple of points which might be urged on its behalf.

First, it may be said that there is a certain broad distinction with which we all operate quite confidently, though we may characterize it in different ways. We may call it the distinction between work which it is appropriate and work which it is inappropriate to judge as literature; or between books which, if they are good, the educated man ought to read and books which, even if they are good, the educated man does not have to read; or between books which the ordinary reviewer can be expected to deal with and books which should be sent for review to an expert. Into the first category, whatever we like to call it, we put novels, slim volumes of verse, *Blackwood's Magazine*, and into the second we put works of chemistry, treatises on hydrostatics, and the magazine *Nature*.

So much may be admitted; but it is not true that we confidently place works of philosophy and the magazine *Mind* in the second category. Philosophy (and the same could be said of history and literary criticism) is difficult to classify along these lines.

The ordinary man is not sure whether he ought to read good works of philosophy and appreciate them as literature or not, and the critic is not sure whether they are his business or not. If he pleads that they discuss problems with which he is unfamiliar, we should consider whether this plea is not just a cloak for critical laziness or lack of adventure. We should think poorly of a critic who refused to pronounce on *Anna Karenina* on the ground that he was a bachelor unfamiliar with the problems which face married women. Educated men do read major works of philosophy, though perhaps less readily today than in the past. And it is remarkable that someone reviewing a philosophical work for philosophers will often pronounce on its literary qualities. No doubt the style is only one of the things the reviewer considers, but then it is only one of the things which would be considered in a review of a novel: that the reviewer mentions it at all shows he thinks it makes a difference to the work's merit as philosophy.

A second argument against regarding philosophy as a form of literature might be this. The achievement of a philosopher can be conveyed if not entirely at least to a large extent by a paraphrase or summary. A student can 'do' Hume or Spinoza, become possessed of much of what Hume or Spinoza had to give, by reading a good book about him. We cannot 'do' a real literary author in the same way. Shakespeare's contribution to poetry in the *Sonnets* cannot be detached from the sonnets themselves, and we cannot become possessed of what he has to give by reading a summary or a book about them.

This argument certainly has force. If we take as our examples a Shakespearean sonnet and Hume's argument about causality, a considerable difference appears. And it could be urged that any good piece of philosophy could have been worded differently without substantial loss or alteration, while a good lyric poem could not. But this argument will not by itself place philosophy outside literature. Novels, epic poems and plays are also works of literature and we can obtain something of what Homer had to give from a simplified prose version of the *Odyssey*, something even of Shakespeare from Lamb's *Tales*. And there is in fact a resemblance between literature and philosophy in this very region. A poet may think it worth while to produce a translation or imitation of a poem by someone else, and his work may have an independent value. In the same way a modern philosopher may try to reproduce in his own

words an argument of Aristotle's and his work may have an independent value. We find no activity like this in science or mathematics. The issue here, I think, illustrates in miniature the point that a thing is or is not the business of the aesthetician not through having or lacking a single feature but through being like other things which are his business in more or fewer ways.

Let me now turn to arguments for holding that philosophy is a form of literature. These will inevitably be numerous and of varying weight. We may notice in the first place that major philosophers have themselves imagined they were engaged in a literary venture. Plato is said to have spent three weeks on the first sentence of the *Republic*. Descartes says of the *Meditations* with unnecessary modesty: 'As for the style, I wish it were better'.[1] And not to multiply instances indefinitely, we have Kant's famous lament; 'It is not given to everyone to write so subtly and at the same time so enticingly as David Hume, or so soundly and yet so elegantly as Moses Mendelssohn.'[2] Why should Kant worry, if he did not think he was writing literature? But if a man thinks he is doing work that is to be appraised aesthetically, surely he is.

Perhaps it will be said that these writers were worried only about how to draw or retain an audience: I have mentioned the view that in a work of philosophy literary qualities are mere extraneous embellishment. Now it is true that some of Locke's best phrases could be omitted without much loss to the argument, but Descartes perhaps reached his greatest literary height in the untranslatably limpid Latin of his description of the wax, and if that were omitted the *Meditations* would hardly make sense. It is not true in general that philosophers display literary talent only in trimmings and decorations: it appears also in the presentation of central arguments and substantive points. Hume's notorious argument against the objectivity of moral judgement is a fine piece of writing: examine it and you will find literary form and philosophic content as closely wedded as form and content in any novel or play. Aristotle is not easy reading, but to read him is to find that a well drawn conceptual distinction can have the economy and brilliance of an epigram. Richard Robinson, not a philosopher remarkable for Aristotelian sympathies, has said: 'I do not admit the common opinion that Aristotle's style is generally ugly, or that he has none. His style is beautiful. Many persons fail to perceive its beauty; but there is nothing unusual in failing to perceive some particular kind of beauty. The beauty of Aristotle's style depends largely on its conceptual power; but it is a genuine aesthetic beauty for all that, and as sensuous as verbal beauty ever is.'[3]

Further, if philosophy were not itself a literary venture, if a gift for

writing could be displayed only in the clothing and not in the body of a philosophical work, we should not expect to find philosophers in great numerical strength on the upper slopes of Parnassus. It would be with philosophy as it is with natural science. Scientists have not all been unlettered men, and the works of Darwin, for one, are well written. Still, if you were asked to name six great English prose writers you would probably not mention Darwin. But if you were asked to name six great Latin poets, you might well mention Lucretius. And Lucretius is a great poet, it should be insisted, not only in his introductions and digressions but in the middle of his arguments, where his slightly simple reasoning gains great power from his perfect mastery of his language and metre. Again, Plato holds a place among the greatest writers not just of ancient Greece but of every age and nation. And these are not isolated phenomena. Descartes's *Discourse* and *Meditations*, Humes's *Dialogues* and *Enquiries*, works of major philosophical importance, are also striking literary achievements. And with them we should consider the many philosophers, like Butler and Berkeley, who have achieved at least the second or third rank in literature, and the many writers of the first rank, like Cicero and Dante, who have just missed being philosophers. Experience shows philosophical and literary talent going together in a way which cannot be accidental.

We cannot, of course, conclude from this alone that philosophy is a form of literature: it might be that philosophical and literary capacity are both consequences of some more basic cast of mind. If someone believed that people with big blue eyes are mendacious, he would not suppose that being blue-eyed was a form of lying or *vice versa*, but rather that both were consequences of a single genetic structure. To show that it is not like this with philosophy and literature I shall offer three arguments of a more theoretical character.

The first may be summarised as follows. Philosophy is a form of persuasion. A capacity for any kind of persuasion is a form of eloquence, and eloquence is a literary art. So a capacity for philosophy is a literary capacity.

The suggestion that philosophy is a form of persuasion would, I admit, have shocked the ears of some philosophers of the past. It has sometimes been suggested that philosophy is, or should be, a science; that the philosopher aims not to win partisans but to establish certainties; and hence that his method is one not of persuasion but of rigorous proof. But that is wrong. We need not think that the story told about philosophy by some recent philosophers—that it is a kind of therapy for distressing states of mental tension—is the whole truth. We may permit philosophers to put forward theses. Still, the theses we associate with them—that the material

world does or does not exist, that we have or have not free will, that the mind is distinct from the body or identical with some part of it—are clearly not theses it would be sensible to try to prove in the way we prove a theorem in geometry or formal logic. To establish a thesis like these is rather to bring people round to a certain point of view. I can appeal here to the authority of Russell: 'Philosophical argument, strictly speaking, consists mainly of an endeavour to cause the reader to perceive what has been perceived by the author. The argument, in short, is not of the nature of proof but of exhortation.'[4]

That the practice of philosophers accords with this description an examination of any piece of philosophy will show. The writer's manner will be found much nearer to that of a barrister pleading a case or a statesman urging a policy than to that of the mathematician or formal logician. Spinoza, indeed, might be thought an exception. Spinoza really does try to set out his philosophy in the form of a series of formal demonstrations; the title *Ethica ordine geometrico demonstrata* is not an empty boast. But neither is it altogether made good. His formal arguments are interspersed with a roughly equal quantity of informal notes which most readers find more cogent, and he nowhere argues for determinism better than in a passage in a letter which admirably illustrates what Russell says: 'Further conceive, if you please, a stone which while it continues in motion is conscious and knows that it is endeavouring so far as it can to continue in motion. This stone, being conscious only of its movement . . . would believe itself most free, and in motion for no other cause than because it wants to be. And this is that human freedom which all boast they have, and which consists in this alone, that men are conscious of their appetites and ignorant of the causes by which they are determined. Thus the infant believes that it freely seeks milk, the angry boy revenge, the timid man flight.'[5]

In practice philosophers always proceed by persuasion, and though Spinoza may have been an advocate unconsciously or *malgré soi*, other philosophers seem to be under no illusions about what they are doing. The notebooks which Berkeley kept while composing his *Principles* read strikingly like the jottings of a barrister getting up a brief. Entry 858 runs: 'I must not pretend to promise much of demonstration, I must cancel all passages that look like that sort of pride, that raising of expectation in my readers.' And entry 687 is well known: 'Mem: to bring the killing blow at the last, v.g. in the matter of abstraction to bring Lockes general triangle at the last'. Again, consider Hume's description of philosophy. 'There cannot', he says, 'be two passions more nearly resembling each other than those of hunting and philosophy'.[6] Hume means by hunting

what the Americans mean, something which rather includes than contrasts with shooting and fishing, and seems, in fact, to have particularly in mind the shooting of small game which you walk up by yourself. The pleasure of philosophy is like that of bringing 'home half a dozen woodcock or plovers, after having employed several hours in hunting after them'. This would be a strange way to describe the working out of a demonstrative system: it suggests the unpredictable play of a living debate in which one may hope to bring down an elusive opponent by a snap shot which just catches him in a vulnerable place.

There is a case, then, for saying that philosophy is a form of persuasion, even of rhetoric: if rhetoric is a literary art, if the works of Demosthenes and Cicero are objects of aesthetic appraisal, so are the works of Berkeley and Hume. I do not mean in this to suggest that the best philosopher will be the most artful or moving demagogue. Philosophy is at the cold-blooded extreme of the rhetorical spectrum. It belongs to persuasion to give people reasons for accepting a point of view, reasons and not just motives, and ideally the philosopher would confine himself to that. But sometimes people are not immediately open to reason. They are prejudiced on an issue, or their emotions incline them to take one side rather than the other. In such a case the philosopher, whose only wish is to give reason its chance, may have first to puncture prejudice by ridicule or excite a contrary emotion to neutralise the first.

But the difference between philosophy and vulgar demagogy will become clearer if we consider precisely how philosophers seek to persuade. This, indeed, is the second of my theoretical points. Aristotle begins his discussion of the notion of place with the following sketch of his aims: 'We must try to carry out our elucidation of the nature of place in such a way that the problems are resolved, that what is generally thought to be true of place remains true of it, and that the cause of the awkwardness of place and of the difficulties felt over it is made clear.'[7]

Aristotle adds that this is the best style of philosophical exposition, and he is surely right. To begin with the philosopher must show that there is a problem for discussion, for that is seldom immediately obvious. Not many non-philosophers realize that there is a problem about free-will or the mind–body relation; perhaps very few are aware that there is any difficulty in the notion of place. The philosopher must not only announce that there is a problem, but bring the problem to life. And to do that he must often state an argument for a conclusion which he himself rejects in a way which makes it seem attractive. Thus if he is discussing fatalism he must show how someone might feel forced to fatalism by a plausible line of speculation; otherwise his refutation of fatalism will be of no value.

This is part of what is involved in 'making clear the cause of the awkwardness of a topic and of the difficulties felt over it.'

But still more important, a philosophical account of any matter must be such that 'what is generally thought true about the matter remains true'. One reason for this is that philosophical arguments start from generally accepted opinions. The premisses of any philosophical argument are propositions which are sanctioned by common sense, or which an opponent cannot deny without giving grounds or appearing arbitrary. But another is that philosophical problems typically arise when generally accepted opinions seem to conflict. In a few such cases a philosopher may eventually invite us to abandon an opinion we should like to retain, but his first aim will be to show that the conflict is only apparent, to give an account which leaves the troublesome opinions reconciled and true.

Nothing in Wittgenstein is better known than the remark 'What is your aim in philosophy? To show the fly the way out of the fly-bottle.'[8] This comes in a discussion of the nature and reality of mental processes which brings out vividly what I have in mind. 'How', Wittgenstein asks, 'does the philosophical problem about mental processes and states and about behaviourism arise? The first step is one which altogether escapes notice. We talk of processes and states and leave their nature undecided. Sometime we shall know more about them—we think. But that is just what commits us to a particular way of looking at the matter. For we have a definite concept of what it means to know a process better.' Wittgenstein means that our model for understanding a process is scientific investigation of the hidden causal mechanisms by which physical changes are produced. It is easy to show that no such investigation can be conducted into mental processes; 'And now', Wittgenstein continues, 'the analogy which was to make us understand our thoughts falls to pieces. So we have to deny the yet uncomprehended process in the yet unexplored medium. And now it looks as if we had denied mental processes. And naturally we don't want to deny them.'[9] The aim of the philosopher, Wittgenstein is saying, is to deliver us from a tension which arises from holding several true but misleadingly formulated opinions together—in this case the opinions that mental processes exist and that processes in general are observable and understood by being observed. And the philosopher should not question these opinions, but show us where our formulations misled us and how we are to avoid being misled.

These tasks, to bring a problem to life, to state an argument leading to a difficulty so that it seems formidable, to see where our ordinary thoughts mislead us so that an appearance of conflict results, to establish an account by appealing at each step to what is generally believed, these tasks call for

more than a facility in reasoning and an experience of a specialized field similar to that of chemistry or geometry. They call for an imaginative psychological insight which is at least comparable with that of the novelist or dramatist. The philosopher proceeds by uncovering and formulating thoughts which are present in the ordinary man below the level of articulation. Just as the reader of a good novel will say: 'Yes, that is what I feel, but I realise it only now for the first time', or: 'That is what so and so must have been feeling the other day, but I understand it only now', so the reader of a good piece of philosophy must say: 'Yes, that is what I think about free-will (or perception or whatever it may be), and that is what was troubling me, though I could not put my finger on it.' The philosopher must go further into the reader's mind than the reader can go himself unaided, and for that he needs genuine imaginative insight. Pope wrote in the *Essay on Criticism:*

> True wit is nature to advantage dressed,
> What oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed,
> Something whose truth convinced at sight we find,
> That gives us back the image of our mind.

These lines describe good philosophy just as aptly as good poetry or drama.

I wish to suggest that the philosopher needs a power of imaginative projection similar to that of the dramatist or novelist: similar, but not the same. The novelist typically enables us to understand how people *act* as they do by making articulate the impact on their feelings of circumstances and events in practical life: he makes us acknowledge as our own or as intelligible more or less emotional responses to people and things. The philosopher, in contrast, typically leads to us recognize what we *think* on more or less abstract or academic matters, and achieves a catharsis rather of speculation than of emotion. Still there are times when a philosopher's piece of conceptual analysis is very like a novelist's piece of psychological analysis, for instance when the concept being analysed is that of a feeling or mood or something which plays a part in our practical lives, and when the philosopher illustrates his account, as a good philosophical account always will be illustrated, by a careful consideration of examples. There is a fairly clear difference between, say, an account of someone's thoughts in Dostoevsky and a statement of the paradox of Achilles and the tortoise which makes it seem disquieting. But between these extremes there is a continuum of cases suggesting that the extremes themselves cannot call for radically heterogeneous talents.

Here, then, are two theoretical grounds on which it might be held that philosophy is a form of literature: the philosopher seeks to persuade, and he needs imaginative insight. My third point I can advance only

tentatively, though if it were accepted it should clinch the matter. The argument I should like to propose would run like this. If an activity is essentially linguistic or verbal, an aptitude for it is a literary aptitude and success at it is literary success. Philosophy is essentially verbal: the philosopher thinks and works in words in the same sense as does the poet. If these premises are correct, it will readily follow that philosophy is a form of literature; but unfortunately they raise larger and more intricate issues than I can deal with here: all I can do is try to make this line of argument seem not too implausible.

There is a distinction between what we can and what we cannot do simply by speaking or writing. We cannot build a house by speaking or writing, but we may get someone else to build a house simply by speaking or writing. Now the objectives of the poet and the novelist, whatever they may be, are clearly achievable simply by speaking or writing. The objectives of the physicist and the entomologist as clearly are not. Natural scientists do indeed write, but their scientific achievements are extrinsic to their written works in a way in which poets' poetical achievements are not. In this respect, I suggest, the philosopher is like the poet: the achievements of philosophers are not extrinsic to but immanent in their writings.

The reason for this difference between scientists and literary men is that the scientist has really two distinct tasks. One, which alone is properly scientific, is to investigate the varieties of sea-weed, the motions of electrons, the incidence of illiteracy in industrial conurbations, or what not. The other is to write up his findings and present them to the public. No such distinction holds for the man of letters. Shakespeare shares with the social scientist an interest in the behaviour of man in society; but we cannot distinguish two jobs Shakespeare did, one of investigation and one of writing up his findings. The task of fathoming human nature and the task of composing *Measure for Measure* were one and the same. And it is the same with the philosopher. His job is one of composition in words from the start. There is no investigation of time or efficient causality to be carried out before he starts thinking what to say or write.

The reason for this in turn is that the philosopher, like the literary man, thinks in words. That should be clear intuitively. When you are philosophising you will find that your thoughts, in so far as you are conscious of them at all, are fully verbalised; you are, in the strongest sense, talking to yourself. Not only that, but the philosopher's problem, like the poet's, is to find verbal expression for a vision which is painfully indistinct until articulated in speech. Perhaps, like Hume, I may 'convert my present reasoning into an instance'. It is a philosophical problem what philoso-

phical thinking is. But in a way the philosopher knows very well what it is to philosophise: his problem is to put his knowledge into words. But while I think introspection may be subpoenaed to confirm that philosophical thinking is verbal, some effort should be made to explain why this is so.

What do we mean when we say that someone thinks in words? Consider someone who, we are inclined to say, thinks not in words but in colours, shapes and proportions, the painter. One reason why we describe his thinking in this way is that even when it is clear he may be unable to tell us what it is: he can only show us what colours, lines, etc., he had in mind by painting. But another reason is that he achieves his objectives by means of lines and colours, and his thought is deliberation what colours and lines to use. It is for similar reasons that we say the poet, even when his theme is a scene which might be painted, thinks in words. If his thoughts are clear, he can tell us what he is thinking and, more important, his objectives are achieved by using words; his thought is deliberation how to describe, deliberation not what to do but what to say. Roughly we may say that the operations by which a person hopes to succeed are the operations in which he thinks.

An interesting case intermediate between verbal and non-verbal thinking is that of mathematical speculation. There are certain operations which can properly be called mathematical and which form part of the content of mathematical thought. Geometry provides simple illustrations. Euclid achieves his aims, proves his theorems, partly by non-verbal constructions, by drawing a line CD parallel to AB and so forth. In so far as his thought consists in considering or working out such moves it is non-verbal. More sophisticated examples can be taken from arithmetic and algebra. Cantor works out and makes use of the mathematical operations of covering one aggregate with elements of another and imaging one aggregate upon another. The moves he considers in developing his mathematics and in which he may be said to think are non-linguistic, though it is part of his task to describe them in words. That mathematical thinking is thus partly verbal and partly not is to be expected, since pure mathematics marches with philosophy, the border is not clearly defined, and philosophical thinking is wholly verbal. There are no non-linguistic moves by which philosophers can achieve their ends but their deliberations are all about what to say.

I can bring this out, perhaps, by some remarks about comparison. Poets, philosophers and natural scientists all engage in comparison, but scientific comparison is quite different from poetic and philosophical. When the zoologist compares bats on the one hand with birds and on

the other with mice he is investigating similarities which exist in nature, which lie in the internal features of things, and he proceeds by measuring, dissecting, constructing experiments and so forth. It is by such non-linguistic operations with laboratory equipment that he effects his comparisons. The poet compares in metaphors and similes. The similarities in which he is interested hardly exist in nature or lie in the internal features of things. There are no measurable affinities between his friend and a summer's day or between old age, winter and a man with hands. It is tempting to say that the poet creates his resemblances; more accurate, perhaps, to say that they lie not in the things compared but in our thoughts and feelings about those things. And to say that poetic comparisons are made in metaphors and similes is to say that they are effected by using words. They are inseparable from speech as trumping is inseparable from card-playing. It is just the same with the philosopher. Metaphor is not more important in poetry than analogy in philosophy. Descartes compares the relation of mind and body with that of flesh and bone,[10] and Aristotle compares it with that of sight and the eye.[11] These resemblances do not exist in nature. We are tempted to say that philosophers create them, but again it is safer to say that they lie, not indeed in our feelings, but in our thought and speech about the things related. And a philosophical analogy, like a poetic metaphor, is a linguistic achievement.

The same may be said of philosophical distinctions. We cannot establish or demolish a distinction between things and properties, or between time and change, or between a cause and a purpose, by studying the internal features of the entities distinguished. But we sometimes can by what is manifestly a linguistic operation. Thus Aristotle argued that pleasure is not a process, because processes are all quick or slow but we cannot be pleased quickly or slowly. The move he makes here is the linguistic move of attaching a couple of adverbs to verbs for processes like 'walk', 'build' and to verbs for experiencing pleasure. His discovery of this difference between pleasure and processes cannot have been separate from the discovery how to express it.

No doubt not all philosophizing is as overtly linguistic as this, but I think that the moves of the philosopher are always linguistic in a way. To take one further simple example, suppose you are considering the view that a voluntary act is one caused by an act of will: it may occur to you to wonder about these acts of will: must they be caused by other acts of will and so ad infinitum? What occurs to you here, I suggest, is quite strictly a question, a thing to ask or say: your philosophical idea cannot be detached from its linguistic embodiment.

The verbal character of philosophical thinking, I suspect, is due ulti-

mately to the fact that the concepts which are the philosopher's concern are all what are sometimes called formal concepts, concepts less of things than of how we think and speak about things, concepts which we should not have at all if we did not describe things and still more our thought of things, in formally different ways. That, however, is one of the large and intricate problems I cannot here pursue: I hope I have said enough to give some indication of how one might argue that an aptitude for philosophy is essentially a linguistic aptitude. If that is right, and any such aptitude is literary, a capacity for philosophy will be a literary capacity of a sort.

Let me summarise, then, the case for holding that works of philosophy are as such objects for aesthetic appraisal. Technical reviews of such works contain criticism of their style. Philosophers restate arguments of their predecessors in a spirit in which poets imitate earlier poets, but in which scientists do not reproduce the experiments or demonstrations of earlier scientists. Philosophers think themselves engaged in a literary venture. Literary and philosophical talent in practice go strikingly together. Philosophical works have affinities with speeches which we appraise aesthetically in that they are designed to persuade, and with novels and plays which we appraise aesthetically in that they show psychological insight and a power of imaginative projection. And finally philosophers, like poets, think in words, and their achievements are immanent in their books. These are the threads, or some of them, which bind works of philosophy into the field of aesthetics.

But I am concerned not merely to illustrate a thesis about that field but to answer a specific question. Is philosophy a form of literature? Some of my threads are finely spun; are they collectively strong enough to haul philosophy over the border? I think we must admit that if philosophy is a form of literature it stands some way apart from poetry, drama, novel-writing and the like. Indeed, I have suggested two reasons why that should be so. Philosophy is the limiting case of rhetoric in the direction of dry intellectualism; and the philosopher's insight is into our inarticulate intellectual, not into our inarticulate emotional problems and states. Philosophy to my mind stands to the obvious literary arts somewhat as a comet stands to the planets. It is much more tenuous than they, being composed, you might say, largely of gas or dust while they are composed of solid earth and rock, and it moves in a far more elongated orbit, but it is an entity of the same kind revolving round the same sun. And the parallel might be pressed further. Comets disappear from our sky and wander out beyond the planets into empty space, but at intervals they return to our midst and circle the sun. Similarly philosophy has over the ages periodically withdrawn itself from and periodically returned to

the literary arts. The philosophers at the end of the Middle Ages took philosophical language far out into the darkness of space, but Descartes and Locke steered it back to lighter regions. Hegel and Bradley removed it again, and with Russell and Ryle it is once more at perihelion. The lesson of this is plain. Philosophy is less substantial than the literary arts generally and its business is different, but it draws its impetus from the same source and if it were to break loose from that source and depart from the literary system altogether, it would cease to be philosophy.

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PHILOSOPHY AND FICTION

The novel as eloquent philosophy

D. W. Theobald

I

G. H. LEWES is said to have remarked to George Eliot: 'You have wit, description and philosophy—these go a good way towards the production of a good novel.' Lewes, I think, did not mean that explicit philosophy in the dialectical manner of paper or treatise always makes for a good novel, although some novels, notably what are usually referred to as *les romans a thèse*, verge at times on the explicitly philosophical, and the philosophy they carry in fact gives them a good deal of their value as novels. But there is something worth thinking about in Lewes's remark none the less. And in this paper I want to inquire fairly cautiously whether there actually is any common ground between philosophers and literary artists, where it lies, and what it is like. Two quick points here. Even if I manage to locate such common ground, I would not want this to be taken as indicating that I think that the novel and philosophy are the same undertakings. This would be quite absurd, because patently they are not. All I hope to claim is that one cannot separate philosophical man from literary man without impoverishing one's understanding of both. Again my remarks may not be true of every novel or every piece of philosophy, but this does not dismay me unduly. For universal theories leave little room for manoeuvre, and moreover it is very unlikely that any theory so simple as the one I am going to discuss can plausibly say all there is to say about such complex writing as novels or philosophy. I would certainly not wish to be accused as Uncle Toby was by Tristram 'that like all systematic reasoners, he would move heaven and earth, and twist and torture everything in nature, to support his hypothesis.'

To start with some introductory remarks about philosophy. Philosophy I take generally to be an attempt to understand the fundamental divisions of significance we use to make sense of the world. We can illu-

strate this as follows. The scientist tries to understand the phenomenal world by investigating the properties of the various bodies which constitute it. He is concerned with the measurable chemical, mechanical and electrical properties of physical bodies. The philosopher, however, is concerned with understanding how it is that we come to need the notion of physical body, and the notion of physical body having properties. In other words, he is interested in what differentiates bodies logically from things other than bodies; and then in why the notion of physical body is an indispensable counter in rational cognitive thought. Clearly language is of crucial importance here because such logical differences are expressed and handled linguistically. Language happens to be the principal vehicle of contact between rational men. The way we talk does, as a matter of fact, reflect, control and structure our experience of the world and enable us to develop a more or less coherent concept of reality which can be shared by all of us.

I shall argue that philosophical understanding is achieved by taking such fundamental notions as I have referred to, reconstructing their logic, and then discovering how effective these reconstructions are in doing the job the originals did. For example, the notion of a person as we normally understand it has at times under philosophical pressure collapsed to that of physical body or a collection of mental states. This has had the effect of exposing the boundaries of the concept of a person more clearly, and showing why such a notion is as fundamental as we feel it is. In this way we can expect our understanding of persons in the world and the way we talk about them to be more subtle and sensitive. For we are then in a position to modify our ideas about what a person is, about what marks persons off from things which are not persons.

Now to turn briefly to the novel. Merleau-Ponty in the preface to his book *La Phénoménologie de la Perception* remarks that true philosophy 'est de rapprendre à voir le monde' and so—and this is important—'une histoire racontée peut signifier le monde avec autant de "profondeur" qu'un traité de philosophie'. I agree with this, and later I shall try to argue that a novel is a deliberately constructed analogy for the reality of ordinary life and circumstance, constructed by manipulating the meanings of quite ordinary, although at the same time fundamentally important, concepts. These are certainly characteristic of a given novel, and sometimes they are characteristic of the work of a given novelist as a whole. The novelist's purpose like that of the philosopher is to persuade us to look again at the fundamental distinctions we make in understanding the world. And I believe that in so far as a novelist selects and manipulates common concepts in the way I have just suggested thus far his

art is properly described as philosophical. Since, as I have said, these concepts are usually dealt with in their linguistic expression, the common ground between philosopher and novelist lies, as perhaps one might have expected, in their professional concern, even self-conscious concern, with language and what we do with it. Of course there is more to a novel than this. For one thing there is the important point Coleridge made, that in art philosophical distinctions are not only thought, they are felt. They are 'proved upon pulses' as well as turned over in the mind. But I shall return briefly to this point towards the end of this paper.

I now want to elaborate a little upon the preliminary remarks I have made about philosophy. My own point of view certainly cannot claim originality, but its implications for the connection between philosophy and literature may be less well known. As I have said, philosophers are not interested *simpliciter* in matters of fact in the way in which scientists are said to be. They are interested in the logical boundaries associated with the concepts in terms of which such matters of fact are stated. We might say that although philosophers are interested in facts, they are not interested in matters of fact. Kierkegaard put this difference very aptly in the following way, although here he was actually concerned with morality rather than philosophy in general. 'What philosophers have to say about morality is often just as disappointing as it is to read on a sign at a second-hand store: "Ironing done here". If you should come with your clothes to be ironed, you'd be fooled; for only the sign is for sale.'[1] Philosophers are interested in conceptual analysis because concepts in a linguistic form are the instruments whereby the experiences of individuals can become common experiences. They are the instruments of rational communication. Indeed it is even plausible to argue that we need a language to make sense of our own experiences let alone those of others, experiences 'which else senseless and shapeless were.'[2] But as has often been said, our use of a language can become so much a matter of habit that we are prone to take the particular way it structures experience for us as beyond question. We become so familiar with a language that it gradually loses its power to make us *see* the world rather than just look at it. The remedy for this is the realization that no single framework of language can be *the* correct one, because there is no single, demonstrably correct way of construing experience. And it is one of the tasks of the philosopher to help us realize this. Knowledge, as the outcome of experience, is not something immutable, 'out there' to be captured once and for all, but is, as Coleridge realised,[3] something to be created and recreated. And this partly because language is an invention subject to creative renewal by philosophers, artists and indeed scientists. (I have

argued elsewhere that some important scientific revolutions have been in essence almost linguistic revolutions.) As Sartre might quite legitimately have put it, language is one of the greatest liberties to which we are condemned. For a language hovers over the world, settling upon it not only as an instrument of definition and as an instrument of expectation, but as an instrument of revaluation. All this much is probably familiar and uncontroversial because very general. Notorious difficulties arise when one tries to examine these ideas in detail, but such difficulties are not my interest in this paper.

The philosopher, then, tries to break the tenacious hold our language can have upon the picture of the world we carry about with us. And I have said that he does this by taking a concept or perhaps group of related concepts on one side, reshaping them, and seeing what happens when they are then put back to work in the contexts from which they came. Here it is worth mentioning a passage of Valéry. Valéry has written at length about the nature of philosophy and its relation in particular to poetry, and his work deserves far more attention than English philosophers have so far given it. He writes in a piece on poetry and abstract thought: 'Voici la remarque: vous avez certainement observé ce fait curieux, que tel mot, qui est parfaitement clair quand vous l'entendez ou l'employez dans le langage courant, et qui ne donne lieu à aucune difficulté quand il est engagé dans le train d'une phrase ordinaire, devient magiquement embarrassant, introduit une résistance étrange, déjoue tous les efforts de définition ausitôt que vous le retirez de la circulation pour l'examiner a part, et que vous lui cherchez un sens apres l'avoir soustrait à sa fonction momentanée.'[4] It is a consciousness of this strange opacity which Valéry refers to, and the need to explore it, which the philosopher tries to cultivate in us, so that we no longer take our language quite so much for granted. I have already mentioned the philosopher's discussion of the notions of a person or a body as examples of this.

Philosophy is not therefore a procedure for specifying *the* meanings of words. For there are no such unique meanings. Philosophers are not legislators; they are not committed to giving us either certainty or even clarity. Philosophy is simply a technique for maintaining a measure of sensitivity in the delicate relation which exists between ourselves, words and the world. 'Language is the armoury of the human mind,' wrote Coleridge, 'and at once contains the trophies of its past, and the weapons of its future conquests.'[5] If we are limited by poor linguistic resources, 'shabby equipment always deteriorating' as Eliot has it, then perhaps we ought to start blaming philosophers. Yet I would like to argue in the rest of this paper that we should also start blaming novelists.

II

I quoted earlier some remarks of Merleau-Ponty from *La Phénoménologie de la Perception*. Later in the same book he says: 'À vrai dire, le sens d'un ouvrage littéraire est moins fait par le sens commun des mots qu'il ne contribue à le modifier.' This is a precise expression of the theme of what follows. My object will be to show that we may with advantage look at a work of fiction from the standpoint of the philosopher. As I have said, this does not commit us to the view that fiction *is* philosophy, any more than it commits the sociologist, for example, who looks at society from the standpoint of the psychology of individuals, to the view that sociology *is* psychology. The sociologist sets out to see what the workings of society look like when they are construed in the language of psychology, hoping thereby to broaden his understanding of social change. And what I am suggesting is that we might develop our understanding of the novel if we were to look at it as philosophers. Dr. Leavis fearfully remarks that too much philosophical method 'disables the critic'.[6] But I would ask whether the converse may not also be true.

I argued in the first part of this paper that philosophy develops a reflective habit of mind about the relation of language to the world. Merleau-Ponty in an essay 'Sur la Phénoménologie du Langage' put it like this: 'Nous commençons à lire le philosophe en donnant aux mots qu'il emploie leur sens commun, et peu à peu, par un renversement d'abord insensible, sa parole maîtrise son langage, et c'est l'emploie qu'il en a fait qui finit par les affecter d'une signification nouvelle et propre à lui. A ce moment, il s'est fait comprendre et sa signification s'est installée en moi.'[7] Although he does not say so explicitly in this essay, I think he implies that the effect a philosophical recommendation has upon the reader is one of shock and surprise, one of sudden conversion to a new point of view. I think he would say that the reader's reaction to a philosophical reconstruction is not simply to reason it out but rather, with Wittgenstein, to exclaim something like: 'Yes, it *is* like that!' or 'No, it can't be like that!'[8] But this is surely the attentive reader's reaction to any *artistic* reconstruction in which the artist is bringing 'the light of magic suggestiveness for an evanescent instant over the commonplace surface of words; of the old, old words, worn thin, defaced by ages of constant usage.'[9] What Conrad here believes the novelist sometimes does I believe the philosopher also sometimes does.

I have already hinted in the earlier part of this paper at the interaction between the structure of life and the structure of our language. Both philosophers and novelists are concerned with giving life an intelligible

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and communicable structure, and inevitably therefore with containing such life within 'a system of verbal relationships'.[10] The freedom yet also the difficulties and responsibilities involved in this explain Valéry's remark that the philosopher like the novelist experiences language as 'à la fois un jouet et un instrument de torture'.[11] The great importance of language in recording the shape of past experience and in suggesting the shape of experience to come has been implicit in critical thought for some time. Thus the American critic Schorer gave it clear and provocative expression as long ago as 1948 in an important article 'Technique as Discovery'. He wrote: 'As for the resources of language, these somehow we almost never think of as part of the technique of fiction—language as used to create a certain texture and tone which in themselves state and define themes and meanings; of language, the counters of our ordinary speech, as forced through conscious manipulation, into all those larger meanings which our ordinary speech almost never intends.'[12] If I understand him correctly, he would agree that the notion of unstructured experience or feeling is artistically, as it is philosophically, quite unintelligible. Experience or feeling is intelligible only when its content (what it is of) has been recognized in the experiencing, when it has been formulated linguistically and thereby structured in the experiencing. In other words, experience becomes intelligible (because communicable) only when it has been captured linguistically. We all know how disconcerting it can be to have a feeling or experience we cannot describe. In fact if we cannot describe it, if we cannot put it into words, we are apt to dismiss it as illusory. There is a related point to be made here which brings us back to Schorer's remark. In poetry the structural function of language in making the poet's experiences intelligible is hardly ever questioned, but as far as prose fiction is concerned language is thought somehow to be of secondary, mere vehicular importance. It is argued that this is shown by the fact that novels can be translated, whereas poems cannot. But I would say that whatever the differences between poetry and prose are, this is certainly not one of them. The view that it is arises from the belief that *what* is said is one thing and *how* it is said is another. But it is clear that this is not usually so except perhaps within the confines of a scientific investigation. What the novelist thinks as a novelist *is* what he writes, *is* the novel. The sense of a novel can certainly be elucidated, indeed this is the critic's business, but it cannot be restated, for example translated. For its statement *is* the novel.

I have already suggested that in a novel a special sense is given to certain areas of our vocabulary, and I would add now that it is a special sense created by the unique verbal style in which it is written. To put it another

way, a novel defines its own reality by the particular shades of meaning given to certain concepts crucial to the novel. The novelist invents situations and characters and devises a syntax appropriate to the reconstruction he wants to suggest that we make of ordinary reality. Such a reconstruction is what I have claimed the philosopher is interested in achieving. Of course such a reconstruction cannot be total. For there must be enough left in common with our ordinary notion of reality to allow some significant comparisons to be made. Indeed, making such comparisons is what we mean by understanding a novel, or a passage pf philosophy for that matter. When the poet Marianne Moore described poetry as concerned with cultivating 'imaginary gardens with real toads in them' I think she could with justice have been describing either the art of fiction or the technique of philosophy.

Illustrations of the point of view I have been elaborating are common enough, and I need mention only a few. For example, the nuances which Jane Austen gives to ordinary moral concepts in *Mansfield Park* have often been noticed by critics. The moral language in this novel hovers uneasily between reduction to a language of public manners on the one hand and a language of the individual moral conscience on the other, and the precarious balance gives the novel its *fictional* power and excites us to see our own moral vocabulary afresh. Dickens by concentrating upon the relation between character and environment, economic, social and educational, makes us wonder whether or not men are victims of circumstance or, to put it philosophically, whether determinism is true or false. Sterne in *Tristram* examines our normal ideas about what constitutes personal identity, as Robbe-Grillet has done more recently in his brilliant story *Les Gommes*. The novels of Samuel Beckett are notorious for the questions they raise about self-identity and its recognition. Ivy Compton-Burnett, by severely narrowing the scope of conversation between her characters, makes us think again about the efficacy of ordinary linguistic communication. These writers are examples of literary artists who, as I see it, are doing implicitly by way of narrative, character and situation, what philosophers would do more explicitly and perhaps painstakingly by way of formal argument. Wittgenstein in the *Zettel* wrote of metaphysics, and perhaps intended it of philosophy in general, that 'it obliterates the distinction between factual and conceptual investigations. It is both at the same time.'[13] Following this I would like to say that the novel obliterates the distinction between conceptual and imaginative investigations. For it is both at the same time.

I think all this gives us at least one clear reason why the merits of a novel are not in proportion to the extent to which it is true or life-like

representation of ordinary life and circumstances. On the contrary it is obvious from what I have said that critical response is a matter of recognising the ways in which it is not this. We do not, for example, consider it a matter of critical regret that Mrs. Norris is not like the ordinary aunts we have met with. If it were, the novel would come down to history or to social science. A novel is not like a counterfeit bank-note or a wax facsimile of an orange, to be judged by the success of the deceit involved. In this I find myself in substantial agreement with what J. M. Cameron had to say in his Inaugural Lecture *Poetry and Dialectic* (1961). Cameron points out in this lecture that a fictional description is not true or false in the way an empirical description can be true or false. 'The poetic description has the form of a description, but exists only as *this* description, these words in this order.' A fictional description describes nothing in the real world, but what it does do is to describe an imaginative reality with the terms which are used to describe ordinary reality. And from the resulting tension springs the philosophical interest of the novel.

The novel, as Caudwell has remarked, creates 'a more or less consistent mock reality which has sufficient "stuff" to stand between the reader and (ordinary) reality'.[14] Put shortly, fictional reality is an analogy for ordinary reality. As I have said already, some of the concepts it uses will necessarily retain their usual significance; this must be so or we should have no point of entry into the fictional world. But some concepts, central to that particular novel, are distorted by the imagination of the artist in submitting to the requirements of his narrative to become mere analogies for the everyday concepts. And when we refocus[15] on ordinary life and circumstances, we can expect to do so with greater understanding and sensitivity. It is precisely this that I believe the philosopher tries to achieve as a result of his more formal discussions.

I think I can now summarize what I have said. Philosophy does not answer any questions finally, and to this extent does not give us certainty. Neither does the novel. But philosophy does help us in our efforts to entertain contrary views about life in this world with greater sensitivity and clarity. And the same wisdom it seems to me can be had by reading novels. It may be that philosophy compared with the novel errs on the side of 'just distinction' at the expense of 'the restoration of our conceptions to the unity in which they actually coexist', to use Coleridge's words.[16] But I am inclined to think that this difference is one of degree rather than kind. Of course there *are* some important differences between novels and tracts of philosophy. One difference between them, Coleridge would have agreed, is that in a novel philosophical illumination is felt as well as thought, acted out as well as stated. Now this is an important

difference. As I mentioned earlier, we have all probably had the experience at some time or other of being unable to identify our feelings and emotions. The problem of other minds notwithstanding, we sometimes require discussion with friends to be sure of our sentiments. In other words, emotional literacy is not innate; it has to be cultivated. And it is part of the novelist's business to improve our ability to discriminate between the various sentiments we have, to discipline our otherwise 'undisciplined squads of emotion'.[17] This is something I am inclined to think the philosopher cannot do. So although the novelist may cause us to change some of our concepts by appealing to the way we *feel* about situations over which they preside, the philosopher can do this only by appealing to what we *think* about those situations. However, although the means of the novelist and the philosopher may sometimes be different, their aims remain, I think, essentially the same.

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THE CONCEPT OF 'MIMESIS' IN GEORG LUKÁCS

András Horn

I

THE ARISTOTELIAN doctrine of art as an imitation of nature is, in essence, an objectivistic theory in which there is little room for the subjectivity of the artist. Although 'nature' does not here denote the totality of concrete entities existing objectively but chiefly the laws governing the actions of merely potential human types, this does not prevent the scope of artistic imagination from being, according to this theory, limited. Even if Aristotle does not interpret imitative activity in terms of a mechanical reproduction of actual things but as a process of creativity (in as much as what it calls into being are merely potential human 'gestures' which in this actual form have not necessarily existed before), yet this creative principle is, in Aristotle's view, inhibited by the very potentialities of human nature: of the persons represented the artist must not predicate anything that is impossible. Thus, prior to the artistic process, there is in any case something to control it: though not the ready-made data of what is factually there, but instead the laws governing the 'movements' of men's minds. The artist's task is confined to letting the human manifestations which he wishes to represent be determined exclusively by these laws, or in other words his task consists in becoming as it were the tool of nature. This is precisely the objectivistic feature in the Aristotelian theory of art: the artist is looked upon as a flawless mirror in which the essential structure of reality is reflected without any subjective modification.

In the course of the history of ideas this theory has assumed various forms. The original Aristotelian notion of imitation in the sense of representing the essence, the ideal (that is to say, of making the concept, the 'characteristic', manifest) does not arise until Goethe, Schelling and Hegel. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the theory of imitation is consistently misinterpreted in terms of idealization in the sense of Plato

and everyday usage, namely as the representation of a better and more beautiful world (of an 'idealized' one, that is). The first of these Platonizing Aristotelians was Batteux, to whom imitation of nature was identical with the imitation of what is *beautiful* in nature; he was then followed by men like Reynolds, Raphael Mengs, Schiller, Schopenhauer and F. Th. Vischer. Yet another variation, going back to Pythagorean–Platonistic sources, can be seen in the aesthetics of measure as propounded by Shaftesbury, Moritz or Schleiermacher, in which the concept of imitation is brought to bear upon the beauty of form. According to this theory all regularity of form is basically an imitation of the idea of nature. Finally, there have also been naturalistic interpretations of the Aristotelian doctrine such as Diderot's, who regarded artistic imitation as imitation of *natura naturata*, of the ready-made, given data of reality.

In spite of their manifold divergences and occasional non-Aristotelian aspects all these theories have one thing in common: all of them fail to take into account the subjective determinations of the artefact. One can detect a counter-movement, a kind of dialectical antithesis, in certain theories of Romanticism and *l'art pour l'art*, which go to the opposite extreme by denying any relation to nature: art is said to originate in the autonomous creative act of the artist's subjectivity and to have no umbilical cord connecting it to any previously existing reality.

II

In *The Specific Nature of the Aesthetic* (*Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen*), a work written towards the end of his life, Georg Lukács (1885–1971) made a creditable attempt to vindicate the Aristotelian doctrine. Precisely by taking into account the subjectivistic position touched upon above, by including in the concept of imitation subjective components which can be empirically ascertained, by endeavouring to reconcile subjectivism and objectivism in a dialectical synthesis, he advanced an aesthetic theory in which the concept of imitation, of *mimesis*, could again assume a position of crucial importance and could be called, justifiably as it seems, 'the decisive source of art', possibly even '*the* basic aesthetic phenomenon'.[1]

The fact that of all possible theories Lukács took up a basically objectivistic one is not surprising if one knows that he was a Marxist and as such philosophically committed to dialectical materialism, which implies that in epistemology he took a realist view. Epistemological realism holds that the reality of which human consciousness is aware exists independently of it and can in principle be adequately known by it or, in the radical formulation of Lenin, that reality is reflected, 'mirrored',

by consciousness. The Marxist theory of reflection covers not only the subjective acts of cognition but also all that man, through his cognitive activity, creates in the way of cultural values, which is to say that it also refers to works of art. Art *is* a reflection of reality, though to be sure a specific *kind* of reflection.

In Lukács's opinion this specific trait lies in the fact that—in contrast to practical, everyday cognition and to scientific, theoretic cognition, both of which strive to remove from the picture of objective reality whatever is contributed to it by the human subject and is, consequently, anthropomorphic in it—that in contrast to these types of cognition art precisely does *not* de-anthropomorphize its cognitive data. 'Any reflection of reality [has]—generally speaking—the same object . . .', but any reflection serving work, serving practice, must concentrate, on pain of failure, on being in itself (*Ansich*) in a form that is as little tainted with the subject as possible: hence the . . . tendency to de-anthropomorphize.' As against this, aesthetic reflection is invariably bent upon 'grasping every object and especially the totality of objects in an inseparable, though not explicitly stated connection with the subjectivity of man' (564).

What is implied by this anthropomorphizing, this relatedness to man? What are the subjective elements of artistic objectivity? According to Lukács the anthropomorphizing character of art has four peculiar modes of appearance.

The first one concerns the central object of art. What is, in fact, 'imitated', portrayed, represented in art? The answer is: man, the life and the world of man. 'The world represented by art is indissolubly linked to man (457); the object of aesthetic reflection is not the being-in-itself of the world *tout court*, but the world of man' (653). In one passage, it is true, Lukács claims that it belongs to the specific nature of the aesthetic 'that is endeavours to conjure up a totality of man, including the world of sensuous phenomena' (544); yet on the evidence of Lukács's *oeuvre* it is sufficiently clear that the word 'totality' is, in this context, not meant absolutely: it does not include the biological aspects of man. This contention can even be explicitly documented with a quotation from him, according to which it is 'man's inner world and its sensuous manifestations' that is reflected in art (433).

Thus the first anthropomorphizing feature of art can be said to consist in its *anthropocentrism*: its central object is man, more exactly man's mind in its objectivization or 'externalization' (*Entäusserung*).

Art, however, goes further than to confine objective reality to man: even within the world of man, within human life, a further selection is made by reducing it to its essential nature. This is asserting something

about art which has belonged to the basic data of aesthetic speculation since Aristotle, indeed in a certain sense even since Plato. 'While [in other fields of human activity] there is a tension between appearance and essence, . . . in the mimetic work [that is, in the works of art] appearance is formed so as to . . . become a vehicle of essence' (422). Tension between appearance and essence: the implication here is that outside art appearance is not only a manifestation of the particular essence but also shows what is alien, external to it. The tendency of not stopping short at appearance but of examining it with a view to the essence in it, belongs to practical, everyday cognition too. 'Even the most primitive kind of orientation in life is rendered impossible unless the dialectic of appearance and essence is reflected. . . . One may well detect photostatic images of reality on the retina, but even in plain everyday life of the most primitive kind, where the entire man (*der ganze Mensch*) responds to that specific part of total reality which confronts him, the images of reality that are actually perceived are no photostats' (364). Thus even in the processes of everyday thought *as a rule* we tend to leave whatever is not essential out of account; but it is only in aesthetic reflection that this become a necessary, constitutive method. If this kind of reflection is to abolish the tension between appearance and essence and to create appearances that only mirror essence, then on principle it can *not* stick to 'a naturalistic, immediate surface' in the course of the cognitive process (461), precisely because the latter is 'not yet' essentialized. Hence it is clear that *mimesis* does not mean a mechanical, photographic reproduction, a duplication of what is extant; what it does mean is an ideal transformation of the phenomenal world, 'the reproduction of intensive totality, the totality of the essential . . . determinations of the objects' (*ibid.*).

In the context of *mimesis* 'essential determinations' do not of course mean essence as conceived in conceptual form, in theory (what Lukács, rather arbitrarily, calls the 'universal'): they are more concrete, closer to real life, without (as we have just seen) coinciding with the actual thing, the ready-made data of reality. Lukács envisages aesthetic reflection as corresponding to the category mediating between the universal and the individual: the category of particularity (*Besonderheit*). 'Mediating' means, true to Hegelian parlance, a synthesis (*Aufheben*) of both extremes, the universal as well as the individual, in the particular. That is to say, though they cease to be separate categories, there is 'never [complete] disappearance but always a kind of preservation, too'.[2] What confronts us in the work of art invariably contains an element of universality, which *could* also be formulated conceptually (this element warrants the essentiality of the object represented aesthetically); but at the same time it con-

tains the element of individuality, too, by being a sensuous 'this-here' (*Dieses*): something that appears to the senses (*Probleme*, pp. 669–85).

The essence which thus becomes pure appearance in the aesthetic is nothing but the essence of man's life, man's world—in its very relevance to man. For the totality of objective reality is reduced not only to man, but even further to an *essence that is relevant to man.* Art has the mission 'to discover and make manifest to the senses whatever is important to mankind in the world of objects at a given moment' (564). At a given moment—that is to say the human species passes through a historical development whose essential stages and elements are reflected by art. 'Whether it is a love poem or a *nature morte*, a melody or a façade, it invariably expresses what is related to man in history' (849). Exactly what Lukács means by the significant factors in 'the development of the human species' might be clarified by an example which he takes from literature. 'What Shakespeare moulded into his great tragedies was the dissolution of the feudal world; . . . the great types of decline, their passions and fates, the great historical background and origin of decay, the outline of the new man to come' (727).

The use of the phrase 'feudal world' makes it abundantly clear that to Lukács historical stages are marked by different structures and not by the milestones of 'historic' events; they are stages in the development of the structure of human society, that is to say of man's *relationships* to man, formed by man himself. Accordingly the object of aesthetic reflection is more exactly defined as 'the world of men, their relationships to one another and to nature' (644). This passage contains the novel element of man's relationship to nature, the use of the very word 'relationships' betraying that here too Lukács only means those aspects of nature that are relevant to man—the nature 'that [man] is bound up with' (515), whose phenomena 'are in intimate connection with the existence of man' (793). In keeping with his materialistic principles Lukács does not look upon this intimate interrelation as implying that man is merely affected by the phenomena of nature (aesthetically for example), but as an altogether practical relationship: art represents nature *qua* 'cultivated', *qua* transformed by human labour. 'The notion that all that mankind has accomplished in the way of exploring, harnessing and subjugating nature, of developing human relationships, of perfecting and humanising man, the notion that all this is a product of man himself, is brought into focus and made immediately evident [by art]' (579).

The proposition that man's relationships to nature and to his fellowmen, in as much as they are relevant to the whole of mankind, are generally represented by art in no other form but as the results of labour, a

deliberately formative human activity, this proposition is open to doubt. Just as, in its purely aesthetic relevance, even uncultivated nature can very well become an object of art, in the same way we must assume that there are certain interpersonal relationships such as love, aggression, the tendency to dominate, etc., which are central to art, yet have certainly not been brought about by any positing on the part of man. They are *natural* characteristics typical of the entirety of the higher animal kingdom.

These objections, however, are only meant to challenge the one-sided qualifications which Lukács, owing to his Marxist position, feels bound to ascribe to the object of 'imitation'.

By first carving the world of man out of the totality of objective reality, then out of this that which is essential in the relationships that are relevant to man, art undoubtedly becomes one-sided, which is another way of saying that it anthropomorphizes: man, the subject of the aesthetic position, makes a choice which is subjectively determined (in that it is determined by the point of view of the human species)—a choice from all the objects and aspects of objects that could possibly be represented. Yet in another sense this one-sidedness does not imply subjectivism in as much as the interpersonal relationships no less than those aspects of nature which are relevant to man are carved out of nothing but objective reality: they too belong to the world as it is in itself (*Ansich der Welt*). What we call objective is not only that which exists independently of man as a species but also all that which, within the world of man, exists independently of the *individual* subject. And as art purports 'to bring out in relief certain features which are inherent in reality itself' (554); as it conceives of 'the relations of objects to man . . . as their own indwelling determinations' (784); as, in other words, art does not transform, according to the arbitary will of the individual, the objective relations between man and man on the one hand and man and nature on the other: 'in aesthetics, and only in aesthetics, the anthropomorphizing principle' means, in Lukács's view, 'no subjectivizing . . . but a peculiar kind of objectivity, whose peculiarity consists precisely in its being inseparably connected with the human species as both the object and subject of the aesthetic' (285–286).

Furthermore art is also anthropomorphizing in the sense that it represents man and those essentials of his inner world and his environment which are relevant to mankind not in conceptual form, that is after the manner of science, but in a way that makes them fit to be subjectively felt, to be *experienced* (*erlebbar*). In this emphatic sense of the word man can only experience what is sensuous and concrete, hence art has a determination which, if looked at from the point of view of its cognitive function,

can again be called subjective when it refers to mankind; the determination of concreteness, which in its turn implies sensuousness (2/298). That this aspect of artistic anthropomorphizing need not mean subjectivism either, becomes clear if we consider that being-in-itself can also be 'contained' in what is sensuous and concrete. On the one hand, it is true, the world of the artefact 'is, in the form of its appearance, qualitatively different from . . . reality as known to science' (in that its form is not that of thought, universality); on the other hand (as something particular) it retains 'the essential structure' of conceptual reality (826).

Art, however, does not only represent its objects in a form that makes them *fit* to be experienced but also as actually experienced by man. Being-in-itself, the essential relations of that segment of human reality which has been selected as subject-matter, are not embodied in the work of art 'in themselves' so to speak, not in their matter-of-fact 'objectivity', but as they are *experienced* by man, by the artist's subjectivity. The objective body of the work of art is, to Lukács, 'infused in all its pores . . . with subjectivity; or, to be more precise, with a determinate, concrete subjectivity' (565). It is 'something personal, an *individual* work (*Werkindividualität*), whose individuality originates not only in formal, stylistic peculiarities but primarily also in the omnipresence of an artistic subjecvity which takes sides, which experiences the objects of representation in this or that way, but which never fails to approve *or* disapprove of them' (655). Thus what the work of art represents is not being-in-itself, but being-in-itself *and* its subjective, personal reflection. 'The origin and background of the work as a totality must of course be provided by the objective substance of reality itself; this, however, in a manner prescribed to the artist by his time, his race, his social class, his personality' (753).

Yet here, too, one cannot help raising the question which must have become familiar to the reader by now: How can this undoubtedly subjective factor of *mimesis* be reconciled to the objective validity which it claims? It may be true that 'in the mimetic work the impression created by an object belongs to its very objectivity' (567), but this objectivity must then certainly be tinged with subjectivity. This contradiction between the claim to objectivity and the all-pervading subjectivity is, not unexpectedly, one of the most difficult problems in Lukács's aesthetic theory.

According to him there are two conditions that must be fulfilled if 'the synthesis of the highest grade of objectivity and the highest grade of relatedness to the subject'—this 'basis of the aesthetic proper'—is to be achieved (617). The first condition is described as *Entäusserung*, which in this context means temporarily taking oneself out of oneself by devoting oneself, with the least possible amount of prejudice and schematism,

to the essential structure of objective reality. Subjectivism comes about, in his view, 'only if the subject is unable or unwilling to go the roundabout way leading to himself via *Entäusserung*, by losing himself in the world of objects, by unconditionally giving himself up to it' (569). This is only possible in the process 'of discarding prejudices, idiosyncratic insights and emotions, ideas and feelings that one can only cherish if one is not willing to go through with them' (676). Thus a valid attitude is only possible if the object of this attitude is known for what it really is, if the cognitive process keeps on starting anew and follows the particular outline of its object as closely as possible.

This in itself presupposes, as we have just seen, a kind of self-denying as it is necessary for the subject to relegate certain wishes of his own to the background in order to see the world as it is and not as he would have it. This, however, is only the first, preparatory stage: the stage of cognition. It is quite conceivable for the attitude to turn out to be subjective in spite of cognition proceeding as objectively as possible, in which case the work can make no claim to 'the highest grade of objectivity'.

In order to understand the way in which Lukács proposes to extricate himself from this theoretical predicament one must bear in mind that as a Marxist he believes in a rational course of history, in an evolution and perfection of the human species, determined by changing productive relations. In a history of this kind there are always progressive and reactionary factors, 'correct' attitudes and 'incorrect' ones, correct being whatever recognizes and approves of the rational changes under way ('rational' in as much as, ultimately, they promote the liberation of mankind). Artistic originality is, to his mind, primarily tantamount to 'discovering and elucidating what is new among the phenomena of life, a *parti pris* for what is new in the struggle between nascent and moribund forces' (*Probleme*, p. 727). This recognition and approval are part and parcel of the rational course of history, of the development of mankind, of what constitutes man as a species. This artistic attitude is not subjective, provided that its peculiar character arises from the artist's adopting the viewpoint of man as a species, from his 'surmounting what is merely particular' in his personality (581): provided, that is, the artist surveys 'reality from the vantage-point of mankind' and manages to make us experience 'that which in him belongs to man as a species (*das Gattungsmässige in ihm*) . . . as the essence of his very personality' (583). Precisely because essence and mankind's attitude to it are, in Lukács's view, historical and hence particularized, it is conceivable for this attitude to constitute the very particularity of a given artistic personality and still to be 'the response of mankind', a mirror of the world. 'If they are profound

enough, true knowledge of the world and true experience of the self coincide in a new immediacy' (582).

If one accepts the thesis according to which art represents being-in-itself in its relevance to man, it logically follows that being must appear in art in the refraction of a human subjectivity, that is as something that has been experienced. The question is, however, firstly, whether the 'experiences' in question must indeed be confined to those of the artist himself; whether, to meet the requirements of the above conclusion, it is not sufficient for them to be experiences *tout court*, implying also those of the individual figures represented, which need not necessarily be identical with the attitude of the artist. Secondly, it is open to question whether it is invariably the respective attitude, the 'partisanship' (*Parteilichkeit*), that in fact determines the character of the subjective impression. It may be true that, as Lukács says, 'the very perception of an object is inseparably connected with its approval or disapproval' (655). What *is* to be doubted, however, is whether this attitude is always relevant. There can be an essential difference between the subjective reflexion of a sunset and that of an autumn day although the attitude to them both is basically similar.

Finally, it is questionable whether the main point of Lukács's argument is valid at all: whether it is possible for the work of art to be completely permeated 'by the particular quality of the subject' (564), *and* for this particular subjectivity to 'voice the true essence of the objective world' (2/296). For however particularized being-in-itself may be, it remains basically the same within a given period of history, whereas the great works of the same epoch are, in spite of certain common features, manifold and differentiated or, as Lukács himself puts it, individual works (*Werkindividualitäten*), the reason being among other things the very difference in the respective world-views involved. This is acknowledged by Lukács himself when he writes: 'How frequently has the same reality been portrayed by various important artists: their mirroring and their way of giving form to matter have been different in kind; in their creation of types, in their perspective they have occasionally arrived at considerably divergent results' (*Probleme*, p. 740). It is obviously impossible for all of them to have reflected, *each according to his own particularity*, the particular character of the respective historical essence, the *hic et nunc*, at the same level of objectivity.

There are two ways out of this dilemma, the first being that one singles out one artistic subjectivity, claiming that its particular structure is the only one corresponding to the particularity of the historical period in question: a dogmatic approach which would hardly do justice to the plurality and wealth of aesthetically valuable works within the same

hic et nunc. The other way out consists in acknowledging the fact that the particular character of the historical appears, in various refractions, according to the artists' personality; that, in other words, what the concept of reflection can meaningfully be applied to are but the *main tendencies* of reality. This theoretical possibility seems to be the one Lukács chooses in the following passage: 'If we . . . do not so much reflect upon details which may be ever so characteristic, but compare, instead, the sum total of the respective *oeuvres* with the historical reality reflected by them, . . . it becomes manifest that, concerning the reflection of the decisive mainstreams of these periods, the totalities of such works converge much more considerably than originally assumed on the basis of the immediate aesthetic experience one had with each of the individual works' (*Probleme*, p. 740). Yet in as much as *e.g.* Pushkin's Onegin, Lermontov's Pechorin, Herzen's Belkov, Turgenev's Rudin, Goncharov's Oblomov represent the same 'Oblomovism', the works in which they appear are anything but individual, show anything but subjective characteristics; just as, conversely, by being subjectively informed (which they are, even in Lukács's view) they are 'more', they have a larger number of qualities than they would have if they were mere reflections of objective tendencies. This plus is related, by definition, to the subject and not to the world, thus thwarting any complete solution of the contradiction between art's alleged claim to acute objectivity and its all-pervading subjectivity.

Lukács explores even a third possible way out, which, indeed, runs counter to the preceding one. It is conceivable, so the argument runs, that it is not only the common features in the works of art of a given period that are reflections, but their divergences, the 'contradictions' existing between their representations as well. These so-called contradictions in selection and perspective are said by Lukács 'not to exclude one another so that the truth of one would have to imply the falsity of the other, but to be . . . contradictions of life itself, which, for that very reason, precisely because of their contradictory nature, can very well stand side by side, indeed . . . they are meant to complement each other' (*Probleme*, p. 742).

Quite apart from the fact that Lukács, inconsistently enough, seems here to concede a certain aesthetic *raison d'être* even to the 'reactionary' way of depicting reality (provided of course that it is historically representative), the subjective 'plus' manifesting itself in divergences could only be regarded as also being related to the world if, with all great artists, selection and attitude were 'typical', that is representative of the social stratification and situation of their time. We have seen, however, that even on Lukács's premises these are determined by the artist's personality:

the objective substance of reality appears in the work of art 'in a reflection and formulation that is prescribed to the artist by his time, his race, his social class, *his personality*' (753). Thus Lukács himself has to admit that, for all its relatedness to the world, a residue remains in the work of art which is personally determined and hence subjective; this, however, necessarily calls into question the possibility of interpreting *mimesis*, to which on the evidence of the history of the fine arts he is constrained to grant subjectivity, as being at the same time a mirroring in the strict sense of the word.

The doubts that have just been voiced are again not meant to invalidate Lukács's basic contention concerning the general Janus-like two-sidedness of artistic *mimesis*, the coexistence of both subjective and objective factors in the work of art. They refer solely to the dialectical overstatement of his case, to the assumption that in the realm of art it is only genuine subjectivity that makes objectivity proper possible, or in other words that the work of art is objective in its own way, not in spite of, but *thanks to* the omnipresence of the artist's personality.

III

Anthropomorphizing, which has been found to manifest itself as (1) anthropocentrism, as (2) a self-confinement on the part of art to essence that is relevant to humanity, as a representation of (3) what can be and (4) what has actually been experienced by men—anthropomorphizing in this sense of the word does not, however, exhaust the subjective aspects of aesthetic reflection.[3] The subjective elements that have hitherto been analysed are qualities of the work of art as it is 'in itself', without any actual relation to the 'receiving' subject, the recipient. It is true that sensuousness, but basically the other elements as well, are equally determined by the needs of the recipient (man *will* have the essential nature of himself and his environment represented in the reflection of human experience and in a sensuous medium: if he did not do so, there would most probably be no art). But all these elements are *in* the work of art: they belong to the objective side of art, which reflects objective reality in a way that is appropriate to man. This objective side and this reflected reality, however, must be actually experienced if art is to attain its aim of satisfying our aesthetic needs: the work of art must proceed from being-in-itself to being-for-us (*Fürunssein*), it must evoke experiences in us. 'The proposition "no object without a subject," which epistemologically has a purely idealistic meaning, is fundamental to the relationship between subject and object in aesthetics. Taken strictly by itself, every aesthetic object is

of course something existing independently of the subject. However, if it is conceived of in this way, it is only a material entity, not an aesthetic one. . . . Its aesthetic peculiarity consists . . . precisely in evoking certain experiences in the receptive subject by means of *mimesis*, a specific kind of reflecting objective reality' (558). Thus the aesthetic being of the work of art is accomplished only in the actualized evocation, in the subjective experience; in this sense, with reference to the aesthetic quality of works of art, there can indeed be no object without a subject.

In keeping with what we have heard before, the experiences evoked in man by art are such as 'enlarge and deepen his image of himself and of the world that he has, in the widest sense of the word, to do with' (655). These experiences carry the conscious accent of *tua rès agitur*: 'Artistic evocation has the primary aim of . . . making the recipient experience such a portrayal of the objective world as his own personal affair' (2/297). In this way art helps man to self-consciousness (477): it 'raises, above all, the facts of social and human existence to a much higher level of clarity and consciousness than would be possible for men in everyday life, equipped with the specific tools of this sphere' (492). This makes art 'the highest and most adequate manifestation of the self-consciousness of mankind' (616); indeed the specifically aesthetic aspect of *mimesis* consists, to Lukács's mind, precisely in its 'being the self-consciousness of the human species' (851).

IV

Any attempt to reinstate the concept of *mimesis* in aesthetic theory is doomed to failure if a theoretician contents himself with pointing out that *mimesis* in art is not to be taken (a) as any kind of slavish reproduction nor (b) as a purely objective 'mirroring'. Lukács, as we have seen, points out both these things, but he also proceeds to try to apply this concept to the non-representational forms of art, too. As for music and architecture, he assumes that they too can be interpreted in terms of a 'twofold (*doppelte*) *mimesis*'. He refers to a tradition going back at least to Plato and Aristotle, which for thousands of years has as a matter of course regarded music as a reflection of man's inner life (2/331), of human emotions or feelings (*Empfindungen*). This theory is given a Marxist twist by Lukács when he surmises that the inner life (*Innerlichkeit*) of man is a 'product of the socio-historical development of mankind' (2/339), that 'each act of feeling (*Empfindungsakt*) is bound to the external world that has engendered it' (2/340). Thus the feelings that music expresses are in themselves 'reflections' of objectivity; hence music, as a reflection of these reflections, is characterized by two fold *mimesis* (2/340).

Apart from the highly debatable point whether feelings can in fact be 'deduced' from the world, whether here too there is not an indissoluble residue of subjectivity comparable to, or indeed implying, what we have found in the artistic attitude—apart from this, I ask: Are the feelings expressed and evoked by music really experienced as *mimesis* of this world of ours, are they really and typically related by the recipient to objectivity (even in the wider sense mentioned above, comprising, apart from what exists independently of man as a species, the relations between man and man on the one hand and man and nature on the other)? On Lukács's premises this question is not answered by saying that whether or not a relationship (here the one between feeling and the world) is subjectively realized has no bearing on its objective validity. If man does *not* realize the relationship between music and the world when listening to it, then music is *not mimesis* since it does not help him to any kind of self-consciousness. *Mimesis* must have, in Lukács's own implied definition, not only being-in-itself but also being-for-*us*.

In connection with architecture Lukács, true to tradition, distinguishes the purely functional aspect from the aesthetic one. Within the former he makes a second dichotomy starting from the social function of architecture: the architect invariably carries out a 'social mandate' (*sozialer Auftrag*) by building for members of a specific social group something that meets certain non-aesthetic demands (a house to live in, a church to pray in, etc.). This social function can thus be regarded as a reflection of the social demands and, ultimately, of the social groups in question (in so far as purposiveness can be considered the 'reflection' of purpose) (2/426–30). In order to fulfil this social function the parts of a building must primarily serve another function, the technical one of reconciling the opposing forces of gravity and the rigidity of the supporting material (2/417–18). Now the fact that the parts of a successful work of architecture fulfil this technical function is again looked upon by Lukács as *mimesis* in a generalized form, seeing that the creation of a 'static balance between such laws of nature as gravity and rigidity' (2/430) is in fact a 'visual rendering of the struggle between certain forces of nature' (2/419) and hence a 'reflection of the laws in a significant domain of reality' (2/418). The use of the word 'reflection' is here again only acceptable in so far as the *application* of certain forces of nature can be safely said to be a 'depicting' of them (*Abbilden* 2/430). Both of these forms of 'functional' *mimesis* are of a conceptual character and result in the designing of a real structure that can be put to practical use'. This projected spatial reality becomes 'the object of a second *mimesis*', the aesthetic one, which transforms the purely functional design 'according to the principles of the aesthetic'.

To put it in a nutshell: the functional aspect partially 'imitates' nature and society; the aesthetic aspect 'imitates' this 'imitation'; thus architecture, too, is characterized by twofold *mimesis* (2/430, 433).

It is, I think, obvious that in connection with the 'second' *mimesis* in architecture Lukács stretches the concept of 'imitation' beyond breaking-point. Even if we accept that the admittedly conceptual design can be 'depicted' by the aesthetically transformed sensuous building: the aesthetic aspect is not just a sensualization of the functional one. Lukács himself says that the forms required by the 'first' *mimesis* are transformed 'according to the principles of the aesthetic', which is to say that the concrete building is co-determined by principles which cannot be 'deduced' from nature and society. There is certainly a *synthesis* between functional and aesthetic elements in a work of architecture, but not a 'depicting' of the former by the latter.

'The principles of the aesthetic' in the above quotation can mean, since no content is involved, only *formal* principles—those governing rhythm, symmetry and proportion. In Lukács's opinion, even these can be encompassed by the concept of *mimesis*: 'One cannot emphasize energetically enough the reflective character of even the most abstract elements of the aesthetic' (266). Thus rhythm in art is said to derive from, and hence to be reflective of, rhythmical labour (267). It does not, consequently, reflect any *content* of objective reality, but a kind of form that has the function of imparting order to such content (279, 283). Symmetry and proportion are held to be, in virtual harmony with the tenets of the Pythagoreans and Plato, 'a reflection of natural relations brought about by laws of nature' (284–5).

V

Thus we see that Lukács manages indeed to point out certain 'mimetic' elements even in sections of art that are generally regarded as non-mimetic, non-representational. Though his concept of *mimesis* can obviously not solve all the problems posed by an unbiassed philosophy of art, it does have an over-all relevance to art if, and only if, it is taken in its widest possible sense: as implying that art, however autonomous it may seem, is linked by various forms of reflection to the world of man.

REFERENCES

[1] *Die Eigenart des Ästhetischen* (1963), vol. 1, pp. 352, 534. Unless otherwise stated, plain bracketed numbers will refer throughout to the first volume of this edition. The translations are my own.

[2] *Probleme der Ästhetik* (1969), p. 672.

[3] It may strike the reader as odd that, besides the four 'figurative' meanings enumerated above, 'anthropomorphizing' does not seem to be used by Lukács in its literal sense (which is highly relevant to representational art): as representing non-human phenomena in human form. In fact, Lukács does acknowledge this characteristic of art (he even says that the main point of coincidence between art and magic consists in anthropomorphizing in the sense of 'naïvely identifying the motivating forces in the subject with those in the world of objects confronting him', of imagining objective reality 'to be driven by human motives' (382); yet there is hardly any space allotted to this kind of anthropomorphizing in his aesthetics. The reason may be that this at least is a feature of art clearly based on a fallacy which can by no means be explained away as being non-fallacious, as being ultimately a reflection of objective reality. This cannot be done even if one realizes (as Lukács certainly does) that in art, as opposed to magic, the pathetic fallacy is known for what it is: we *know* that there are no sermons in stones, even though there seem to be (415, 425, 520).

CAN REALISM BE SOCIALIST?

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SOCIALIST REALISM, the aesthetic theory with the most powerful patronage and the largest clientele in history (at least if we count the Peoples' Republic of China as still within its domain), is also the theory most enthusiastically condemned by aestheticians of other persuasions. In its relatively brief career the official philosophy of art of the Soviet Union and other socialist lands has been accused of everything from the least logical peccadillo to the greatest of moral crimes, not excluding murder: the latter charge was brought by the Polish writer Czeslaw Milosz, who holds socialist realism 'directly responsible for the deaths of millions of men and women' because it serves to perpetuate the brutal Soviet political system to which those lives have been sacrificed.[1] One criticism, however, is on everyone's list, and it stands at the centre of the philosophical as opposed to the political case against socialist realism as a theory of art. This criticism is that there is an obvious and fundamental inconsistency in the joint demand for *socialism* and *realism* in art.

But what exactly is the inconsistency? Little attempt is ever made to identify it with any care. It is simply asserted, along with a reference or two to the ludicrous unrealism of what passes for socialist art in the Soviet Union. Andrey Sinyavsky, for example—whose pseudonymous *On Socialist Realism* is one of the few attacks emanating from within the USSR—joins many Western critics in suggesting that the very concept of socialist realism is incoherent:

> What is socialist realism? What is the meaning of this strange and jarring phrase? Can there be a socialist, capitalist, Christian, or Mohammedan realism? Does this irrational concept have a natural existence?[2]

And like many Western critics, Sinyavsky assumes a negative answer without actually displaying the incoherency.

The present paper will attempt not to display the incoherency but to show why it cannot be displayed. And that is because the criticism itself, for all its initial plausibility, is mistaken. There is no inherent self-contra-

diction in the aesthetic theory of socialist realism. Whatever else we may think of the theory—however weak, foolish and ultimately indefensible it may be as a view of art—socialist realism is a perfectly consistent theoretical structure with a perfectly consistent application.

The present paper will attempt to show this, not only in logical fairness to a prominent aesthetic theory but as a possible contribution to an understanding of the future evolution of aesthetic thought and practice in the socialist countries. Contrary to common assumption some such evolution does take place, and its direction is not unrelated to the actual structure, content and deficiencies of existing theories. Hopefully some contribution will also be made to the understanding of broader issues in aesthetics, particularly issues having to do with the meaning and use of the term 'portrayal' and hence of related terms like 'depiction' and 'representation' —terms which must figure prominently in any realist aesthetics and which are particularly important for socialist realism.

I

The most common version of the inconsistency criticism is simply the claim that an art object, to be 'socialist' in the sense intended by socialist realism, cannot at the same time be 'realist'. Thus Albert Camus, noting that true socialism must be regarded as a reality more of tomorrow than of today, writes that socialist art consequently seems required to portray not the present but the future. He continues:

> Autrement dit, le véritable objet du réalisme socialiste, c'est justement ce qui n'a pas encore de réalité.
>
> La contradiction est assez superbe. . . . Finalement, cet art sera socialiste dans la mesure exacte où il ne sera pas réaliste.[3]

Camus's position seems to be based on the assumption that art becomes realist by portraying a present reality and socialist by portraying a socialist reality. But if that is the case, his criticism of the theory founders on the simple fact of the existence of at least *one* portrayable present socialist reality. If we grant the existence of *anything* that can properly be called 'socialist', then a work of art portraying that thing realistically is clearly both socialist and realist, and there is no contradiction. A novel about the current Five-Year Plan or a play about life on a collective farm would seem to be unimpeachable examples. And if there are, as Camus rightly suggests, many works of art *called* 'socialist realist' which in fact forecast the future rather than portray the present, the appropriate response to them on Camus's grounds would seem to be, not to conclude that there is a contradiction in the concept of socialist realism but to say that these

works are not really socialist realist. Their existence certainly provides no ground for the judgement that 'cet art sera socialiste dans la mesure exacte où il ne sera pas réaliste'.

If the inconsistency criticism in general cannot be dismissed as easily as Camus's version of it can, the reason is that contrary to Camus's supposition the term 'socialist' appears to go beyond merely stipulating what kind of reality must be portrayed for an art object to qualify as socialist realist. To give both the criticism and the theory itself a full hearing, we must attempt to work out more fully than Camus and other critics have done an understanding of what the theory *does* require by adding the word 'socialist' to the word 'realism' in its title, and then try to present the alleged logical inconsistency more convincingly. In such an attempt to discover the theory's fundamental intent we are aided little by the ancient history of Marxism. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels addressed themselves to aesthetic questions infrequently and haphazardly; what they said about art is often suggestive, but it is far from adding up to a systematic or unambiguous aesthetic theory, much less one which could be called 'socialist realism'.[4] Among the early Russian Marxists, George Plekhanov was interested in aesthetics but Vladimir Lenin, whose influence became dominant, was not. Only in the 1930s, under the inspiration of Josef Stalin and through the efforts of such Marxist epigoni as Andrey Zhdanov (Stalin's Minister of Culture) and the writer Maxim Gorky, was socialist realism formulated and named. Its canonical statement—universally accepted at the time and repeated authoritatively to this day in Soviet textbooks and reference works—is the following paragraph from the 1934 Statute of the Union of Soviet Writers:

> Socialist realism is the basic method of Soviet literature and literary criticism. It demands of the artist the truthful, historically concrete portrayal of reality in its revolutionary development. The truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic portrayal must be in harmony with the objective of the ideological alteration and education of the workers in the spirit of socialism.[5]

Since this passage makes reference to both the realist and the socialist dimensions of the composite, it provides us with the necessary basis for examining the question of their compatibility.

What makes a portrayal 'realist', it seems, is that it is a 'truthful' and 'historically concrete' portrayal of reality. What makes it 'socialist' is presumably not simply that it portrays reality 'in its revolutionary development' (more on that later) but above all that it performs the social function described in the last sentence. The introduction of a social function which art has, and which is specifiable over and above a description of its character as truthfully representational, is of course entirely con-

sistent with the broader Marxist theory of society from which these aesthetic views were in fact derived. Art, like religion, philosophy, legal theory, and other cultural products, is a 'superstructural' phenomenon which is generated by the economic 'basis' of society. Art reflects the interests of the class that creates it and serves as an instrument for the defence and advancement of those interests. Socialist realist art is the art of the working class, whose interests lie in the further development of socialism. Hence the function of socialist realist art must be to advance the cause of socialism.

The canonical passage quoted above appears to limit this function to an educative or propaganda effect on the minds of the workers. But, of course, that effect in turn is expected to contribute to the advancement of socialism. Hence the function of art is often described by Soviet aestheticians in more general terms than those used in the 1934 statement. Consider this expanded version of art's function as stated (grandly) in a current standard reference work:

> Socialist realism demands of the artist the conscious realization of a definite aim—the education of people in the communist spirit, active contribution by means of art to the revolutionary transformation of reality, to the building of a new society, to the struggle for peace, democracy, and socialism, to the formation of a new man, who harmoniously combines within himself moral and intellectual riches, spiritual beauty, and physical perfection.[6]

At this point it may seem that we have found a clear inconsistency between the realist principle and the socialist principle thus understood—*i.e.* understood as a demand to work through 'education' or propaganda and perhaps other means to promote the advancement of a particular social programme. At the very least the two principles are, as Monroe Beardsley says, 'in peril of contradiction', for, as he continues, 'it is easy to think of occasions on which either the demand for truth or the demand for effective propaganda must yield to the other'.[7] *Realism* as such seems to require a disinterested, full faithfulness to whatever is the case, whereas the *socialist* element seems to require an interested partiality, a slanting in the direction of a particular social reality. Thus when the Soviet *Dictionary of Philosophy* asserts of socialist realist art that 'its essence is fidelity to the truth of life, no matter how stern it may be, this being expressed in artistic images *from the communist angle*',[8] the last phrase seems to suggest partisan colouration of what is portrayed.

In fact, however, the purported contradiction is not yet in clear sight, nor can it be until we know just what it is that art must do in order to have the desired effect. Suppose that by some quirk of human psychology the very sight of the colour red predisposes people to think favourably of

socialism—and we may assume that people's thinking favourably of socialism contributes to its advancement. In such a case a painter need only confine himself to the truthful, historically concrete portrayal of red things—Soviet flags, for example, or Campbell's Soup cans—in order to satisfy quite nicely both the realist and the socialist demands. The supposition may be rejected as fanciful, but the problem remains. There is nothing *inherently* contradictory between art's having a certain impact and art's being realistic—unless, to have the impact, departure from realism is not simply possible but *unavoidable*. Being 'in peril' of contradiction is not enough. The question reduces, then, to a more concrete and specific level: What *exactly* must art be like to fulfil its required educative and propagandistic function? (And must it, in consequence, distort reality?)

The question, perhaps surprisingly, is not one which has been systematically or extensively explored by Soviet thinkers. Generally speaking they have assumed that art, like all ideology, is a form of consciousness and that consequently it must operate through acting on the consciousness of people; but what *that* means is far from developed in the literature of socialist realism, and there is no agreement that art does *only* that. The question of what art must be like to promote socialism would seem to be an empirical one, to which social psychologists and other scientists might contribute; but little progress has been made on it in the Soviet Union (or anywhere else) to date. Still, for artists in a planned society to operate *some* answer to this question must be provided or assumed. Such an answer has been provided in the USSR and has become so thoroughly sanctioned that it functions as an unquestioned norm for all Soviet art. Hence we may take it as the operational significance of the demand for 'socialism' in art in the USSR.

This answer is that art will perform its socialist function if it (a) portrays socialist phenomena (*i.e.* leaders, institutions, achievements, events and the like, which can be described as 'socialist') and (b) portrays them *in a favourable light* (*i.e.* as attractive, good, praiseworthy, exemplary, 'positive'). The noble revolutionary hero, the happy tiller of the collective soil, the brave Red Army soldier devoted to his socialist motherland—these are the stereotype products of the demand to present socialist phenomena in relentlessly glowing colours, with the hope of effecting thereby the 'ideological alteration and education of the workers in the spirit of socialism'.

This standard, finally, brings us as close to an explicit statement of the supposed inconsistency between socialism and realism as we seem likely to get, given the undeveloped state of socialist realist psychology. For now the two elements seem distinctly opposed. *Realism* demands of a

work of art that it portray reality *truthfully* (the added requirement that the portrayal be 'historically concrete' is unnecessary for our purposes); socialism demands that it portray *socialist* reality *in a favourable light.* On the plausible assumption that to portray some (and only some) things in a favourable light is incompatible with portraying reality truthfully, the contradiction is apparent.

But is this plausible assumption true? To answer this question we must ask what it means to portray something 'in a favourable light' (or 'favourably', for short), and then ask whether this requires a departure from truthful portrayal. If no such departure is entailed, the inconsistency charge against socialist realism must be rejected.

II

There appear to be a number of ways in which a painter, writer or other artist can achieve what would count as a favourable portrayal. The following is an attempt at an exhaustive list of these ways, with such analysis of each as is appropriate to the topic at hand.

1. *Falsification.* One may portray something in a favourable light by portraying it as possessing some quality which it does not possess, or as not possessing some quality which it does possess. Let us call this method 'falsification', since on the face of it it constitutes untruthful and therefore unrealistic portrayal. Thus if a novel attributes to the Soviet rural collectivization of the 'thirties the happy quality of being universally welcomed by a grateful peasantry, such a portrayal would be a falsification, portraying the events favourably but untruthfully. Or if the real Lenin had been cross-eyed, a portrait which improved his appearance by omitting this feature would be an unrealistic portrait, a product of misrepresentation or falsification.

Thus there is no question that the demand for socialism and the demand for realism *may* conflict, in cases where the mode of favourable portrayal is *falsification.* But this is not to say that they *must* conflict, since there are other modes of favourable portrayal, as we shall soon see. Furthermore, there may even be cases of falsification which are not strictly speaking 'untruthful'. This last point, a source of potential confusion, is worth brief elaboration.

We need not be thinking here only of the things that disturbed Plato in Book X of the *Republic*—the 'falsification' involved, even in the most 'realistic' pictorial imitation, in picturing in two dimensions what is really three-dimensional, 'distorting' actual size relations through foreshortening, perspective, and the like. Such 'falsifications' are inherent in a medium;

they are unavoidable, and indeed they are essential to the most truthful, realistic imitation in that medium (which is, of course, why Plato, who understood logic if not aesthetics, rejected pictorial imitation *per se* rather than some instances of it only). But in an aesthetic sense these practices are *not* falsification, and the definition of 'falsification' above has been formulated to exclude them. The foreshortened leg on the canvas does not *portray* a real leg *as* being something it is not (*e.g.* only half the length of the person's other leg), despite the fact that on the canvas the space occupied by the foreshortened leg is only half that occupied by the other leg; the two-dimensional surface is used to *portray* bodies *as* three-dimensional—*i.e.* to portray them as they are.

The more interesting cases for us are those which may be exemplified by the famous 'flying gallop' portrayal. For generations in order to portray a horse running at top speed painters represented the animal as suspended in mid-air with both forelegs thrust forward and both hind legs thrust back. With the development of high-speed photography, however, it was discovered that such a position never actually occurs in a running horse. None the less in a still picture this position seems to convey better than others the impression that the horse is galloping at great speed. If so, then we have here a portrayal which may be considered favourable (if the context is one in which speed is a virtue in a horse) and which is a falsification in one sense (the horse is portrayed as being in a position it is not in) though *not* a falsification in another (the horse is portrayed as running at top speed, which it is). Here, then, it is through the use of falsification that the favourable portrayal is made, but this falsification does not prevent the portrayal from being truthful in some basic sense and in fact makes possible in a static medium the degree of realism (with respect to the actual property of running at top speed) that the still picture has. Other similar cases can be imagined, the point of all of them being that in a given medium some deviation from photographic accuracy may be needed in the interest of a greater realism, and if this deviation also contributes to viewing the subject in a more attractive light, then in such a case falsification may contribute both to greater realism and to favourable portrayal.

Provided, of course—and here is the possible misunderstanding—that the favourable portrayal is emergent on the greater realism brought about rather than merely on the falsification used as a means. Thus if the virtue in question in the horse case were not speed but the ability to run with all four legs outstretched, the flying gallop portrayal would *not* be an acceptable case of favourable but realistic portrayal. To accommodate this proviso it seems advisable for our purposes to redefine 'falsification'

to exclude the former case but include the latter. Let us say, then, that falsification as a mode of favourable portrayal consists in portraying something as possessing some *good* quality which it does not possess, or as not possessing some *bad* quality which it does possess. In this sense *all* favourable portrayal by way of falsification is destructive of realism.

The other modes of favourable portrayal to which we shall now turn will be defined analogously, and then examined to determine whether they too are incompatible with truthful portrayal.

2. *Exaggeration.* One may portray something in a favourable light by portraying it as possessing some good quality, which it does possess, to a greater degree than it actually possesses it, or some bad quality, which it does possess, to a lesser degree than it actually possesses it.

On the face of it this mode too appears to constitute untruthful, unrealistic portrayal. But its use abounds in socialist realist art. The supreme dedication of the Soviet scientist, the ceaseless industry of the factory worker, the implausibly profound humanity of the party leader—these are familiar types among the models of superhuman virtue which are lavished on the Soviet literary audience. Furthermore artistic exaggeration is explicitly approved and even lauded in the Soviet aesthetics literature. Gorky himself wrote that 'genuine art possesses the right to exaggerate', and recommended that in Soviet novels the heroes should be 'portrayed as even greater and more lofty' than in fact they are in real life.[9] Does not this signify official Soviet acceptance of *unrealism* in the interest of promoting socialism?

Once again there is little doubt that exaggeration *may* yield art that can only be called unrealistic. A portraitist seeking to produce a flattering likeness may so stress and amplify his subject's good features that the image becomes unrecognizable—no longer a likeness. But there are also contrary considerations, which prevent us from asserting any necessary correlation between exaggeration and untruthfulness to reality. Two such considerations seem paramount.

The first is hyperbole, which may be introduced here via a verbal analogue of the 'flying gallop' portrayal. To say of a horse that he ran 'swiftly as an arrow' (or some less archaic equivalent) has been acceptable through the ages in the most 'realistic' literature. The figure exaggerates the horse's speed—as any fleeing horseman overtaken by an enemy arrow can testify. But it also nicely depicts a straightforward situation—that the horse ran very fast indeed—and it does so probably better than saying something like 'the horse ran very fast indeed' or 'the horse ran at a velocity of 44·76 miles per hour), which would be literally truthful. The point about hyperbole of course is that nobody *believes* its exaggera-

tion in the first place—it 'lies without deceiving'; its exaggeration serves simply to depict an actual situation more forcefully and graphically. When, then, the actual situation thus depicted includes some *virtue* of the subject (such, again, as speed in a horse), so that the same portrayal may be said to portray the subject in a favourable light, who will say that the use of hyperbole has made the portrayal 'unrealistic'?

The second consideration is more elaborate. What of exaggeration that goes beyond the occasional use of figures of speech which are casually and harmlessly discounted by the reader and that extends to major and pervasive features of a work—to a character consistently shown as 'impossibly' virtuous, to a collective farm community presented as 'unrealistically' harmonious, and the like? Can this use of exaggeration ever be rendered consistent with realism? Perhaps it can. If it could be established that some features of an actual situation are more revealing of, more symptomatic of, more central or basic to the real nature, the 'essence' of the situation, than the myriad other features which characterize it—perhaps then one might argue that exaggeration of these crucial features is essential to a truthful and non-superficial portrayal of the reality. Now this is just what the socialist realist tries to argue. But because his argument here applies also to the next mode of portrayal to be considered, we shall postpone it for the moment.

3. *Selection.* One may portray something in a favourable light by portraying it as possessing some good quality which it does possess and/or by not portraying it as possessing some bad quality which it does possess. The difference between not portraying something as possessing a quality and portraying it as not possessing the quality is crucial, and serves to distinguish selection from falsification. The distinction requires further elucidation.

If the countess has a mole on the right side of her nose, and the portraitist, painting her in right profile, leaves out the mole, that is falsification: for he is portraying the right side of her nose as *not* characterized by something that does in fact characterize it—the mole. If, however, he chooses to paint the lady in *left* profile, the mole does not show; hence he does not portray her as possessing a mole (as distinguished from portraying her as not possessing a mole). This is not falsification but selection. He chooses one point of view among those possible and presents what is an unfalsified and accurate picture from that point of view. This picture may be thoroughly realistic in a way in which the first picture could not be because of the artistic surgery performed on the mole; and we may assume that it is more flattering—that it portrays the countess in a favourable light.

At first blush, then, selection, by the use of which one may portray

something favourably, seems quite compatible with exact photographic realism. Surely, in fact, *all* portrayal (as distinguished from replication) requires selection—choice of point of view, level of exactness in the reproduction of detail (Pop art was realistic, but it lacked the precision of 'Sharp-focus realism'), and the like. Even a camera must be pointed in some direction—but the 'realism' of the picture it takes seems the same whatever the direction selected. Thus in the case of selection strictly speaking (unlike the case of falsification) it may be difficult to see how it is even possible for it to render a portrayal *unrealistic.*

But surely it *is* possible, as a pleasantry now circulating in irreverent aesthetics circles in the USSR makes clear.[10] What is the difference, a Soviet citizen asks, between naturalism, bourgeois objectivity and socialist realism? Imagine, goes the answer, a Soviet general the right side of whose face is badly scarred as a result of wounds suffered in a losing battle. To paint the general in right profile is naturalism (that is, politically unprincipled copying of the superficial and the inessential); to paint him in full face is bourgeois 'objectivity' (which under the guise of realism is eager to show the failings of socialism); whereas to paint the socialist military hero in his commanding and untouched *left* profile—*that* is socialist realism. To accommodate the obvious point of the jest a distinction something like the following is needed. Though the left-profile portrait may be a perfectly realistic (truthful, accurate) portrayal of *the left side of the general's face,* it is not a perfectly truthful and accurate portrayal of *the general,* since it omits some 'major' or 'determining' feature of the general's overall appearance. In this way, apparently, selection *may* involve a departure from realism. But by the same token it need not: if the right side of the general's face were *not* disfigured by a wound or marked by any other 'noteworthy' difference between it and the left side, we would certainly not regard the left-side profile as an untruthful or inaccurate portrayal of its subject though it results from the same *selection* of point of view as in the previous case.

Clearly, *some* features may be omitted without incurring the charge of untruthful and inaccurate portrayal. One side of a normal face may be omitted. Even highly idiosyncratic features, such as a uniquely malformed toe-nail or the peculiar greenish-purple cast of the general's face when he rises in the morning, may be omitted (the former because it is inconsequential, the latter because it is not his 'usual' colour). The most realistic novels, films and plays fail to record the blood type of the hero and heroine. These are not 'significant' or 'decisive' features. But how are we to determine what features *are* significant and decisive, and consequently what features may *not* be omitted selectively if we are to have a truthful and

accurate portrayal? In the end there is no way to support any such determination without recourse to *non-aesthetic* principles—ontological, historical, psychological, perhaps others. To a confirmed Freudian a novel without libidinous urges must be superficial and unrealistic. To a Christian evangelist libidinous urges may safely be ignored but man's communion with the divine (or rejection of such) cannot be overlooked in any attempt to portray human life faithfully. To Agatha Christie neither libido nor divinity is essential to a realistic murder mystery. But whatever the grounds for making the selection it need not constitute falsification and it can be compatible with realism. Now if at the same time the selection fulfils the conditions for favourable selective portrayal stipulated above—that is, if it portrays something as possessing *good* qualities which it does possess and/or does *not* portray it as possessing *bad* qualities which it does possess—then the selection constitutes a portrayal which shows its subject in a favourable light as well as being realistic.

Precisely the above situation can be said to hold in the case of socialist realism. The Marxist aesthetic theory of socialist realism is accompanied by theories of reality, natural and social, which make fairly clear-cut distinctions between more and less 'significant' and 'decisive' features of the world. Specifically, these theories present socio-historical reality as governed primarily by the production activities in which men engage and the production relations in which they stand to each other in order to engage in these activities, and as developing in a historical progression which consists in the revolutionary transformation of society from capitalism through socialism to communism. To portray reality as thus viewed is of course what is meant, in the 1934 definition of socialist realism, by portraying it 'in its revolutionary development'. In this perspective some phenomena carry far more weight than others and are consequently the phenomena to be selected in order to produce a realistic portrayal. What happens in a wheat field or a machine shop, for example, is central to a truthful picture of social reality; what happens in a church or a bedroom is functionless and derivative: it is socially negligible and hence aesthetically negligible.

Now the developing and multiplying *socialist* phenomena which best characterize Soviet reality 'in its revolutionary development', according to the theory, are also of course marked by an increase in positive social value. Society as a whole is *improving—i.e.* is developing more and better positive features through this revolutionary development. Hence the selection involved in portraying these features is also selection which portrays generally *good* features and ignores *bad* (the latter can only be accidental, temporary, less important). For example, the increase in joint

economic productivity achieved on a collective farm by limiting the private livestock holdings of the peasants is not only an essential manifestation of the onward march of socialism, it is a good thing; the human costs (individual deprivation, coercion, punishment) which result from imposing the change are bad things, but they are accidental and transitory. Hence these human costs may be selectively eliminated from an aesthetic portrayal with no loss of realism. The gifted, resolute engineer who manages one factory is just the sort of person we would expect to be produced by the laws of development at work in Soviet society, and hence he is an appropriate subject of realistic portrayal. The inept alcoholic who happens to manage another factory is an anachronism, a capitalist holdover who misrepresents socialist society; a novel about him would be unrealistic (it would, as seen above, be a work of *naturalism*, not realism). In short, given the fundamental historical optimism or progress-orientation of Marxist theory, there is a built-in guarantee that the selectivity employed in portrayal which truthfully and accurately represents reality will also constitute favourable portrayal—*i.e.* portrayal which shows the good features of what is portrayed. The same selection that makes it truthful and accurate makes it favourable.

A version of this same argument will suffice as well (as suggested earlier) to justify favourable portrayal by way of *exaggeration*. Only one additional assumption is needed: that exaggeration is an effective way of giving relative prominence to the qualities or features exaggerated. Now the dedication of the factory workers to their jobs is a crucial feature of the new socialist reality. So that this feature will stand out as befits its importance, so that it will have its proper weight vis à vis other features portrayed (thus making the novel a properly truthful and accurate portrayal), it may be artistically exaggerated.

We may of course disagree with the socio-historical theories which, conjoined with the aesthetic theory of socialist realism, generate these consequences. But if we agree (a) that aesthetic portrayal is impossible without selection; (b) that a distinction can be made between selection that falsifies and selection that does not; and (c) that the principle of that distinction must be provided by some theory which allows us to distinguish between more or less 'significant' or 'decisive' phenomena—if we accept these theses, we cannot fault socialist realism for relying on non-aesthetic theories for its determination of what is realistic portrayal and what is not. Any realist aesthetics must do the same. Thus it might be said that there is nothing wrong with socialist realism as an aesthetic theory that a respectable set of socio-historical theories wouldn't cure.

4. *Commendatory portrayal.* A fourth and final mode of favourable por-

trayal is defensible even apart from Marxist socio-historical theories, and is perhaps the most effective of all in showing that one may portray something favourably without portraying it unrealistically. Though this mode may be called by the one name 'commendatory portrayal,' it has two distinct varieties, which are simple enough to present very briefly. Both may be regarded as artistically deplorable practices, but there can be no denying that they are not only possible but widely employed, in and out of the Soviet Union.

(a) One may portray something in a favourable light by portraying it *as commended*. In the Soviet context, for example, a realistic story about a new electric power station might truthfully include as a part of the story Lenin's praise of the new facility, expressed at the time he dedicated it. Generally, to portray something as valued positively by someone (especially someone sympathetic) would surely count as portraying it in a favourable light, and would in no way prevent its portrayal from being truthful—unless of course there were no one who valued it positively.

(b) One may portray something in a favourable light by commending what one portrays as one portrays it. In other words, the artist can accompany his portrayal—which in itself may be thoroughly truthful—with praise of what he is portraying; hence this mode of favourable portrayal also seems compatible with strict realism. And the two functions of portrayal and commendation seem aesthetically compatible, in some of the arts at least. The writer can readily employ commendation, so long as his own voice is established as an element in his work. The visual artist and the composer can commend as well, though perhaps only by literary means—*e.g.* through a title or an accompanying programme, or through incorporating a verbal message in an otherwise non-verbal work.

III

Hopefully, the above considerations have shown that there is no logical incompatibility between the two fundamental demands of socialist realist aesthetics—truthful portrayal and the promotion of socialism. We have argued that socialism is thought by Soviet aestheticians and artists to be promoted by portraying socialist phenomena in a favourable light, and that there are at least three ways—exaggeration, selection, and commendatory portrayal—in which favourable portrayal may be achieved without sacrificing realism.[11]

This is *not* to argue that in practice Soviet artists *do* effect a happy union of realism and socialist partisanship. On the contrary, the great mass of Soviet art in all its varieties does *in fact* abandon truthful portrayal—even

as understood in accordance with Marxist principles of selection—for politically motivated misrepresentation. In the actual situation of Soviet art cases of favourable portrayal by way of falsification greatly outnumber skilful and effective applications of exaggeration, selection and commendatory portrayal to marry realism with partisanship. But the foregoing analysis should show that if this is so, it is not because such a situation is somehow logically required by the *theory* of socialist realism. It is, rather, a result of the politicization and bureaucratization of art in the Soviet Union, which subjects artistic practice to numbing and restrictive pressures of every description, from the aesthetic insensitivity of a party leader to the institutionalized diffidence of the professional association to which the artist or writer must belong if he wishes to survive. The *theory* of socialist realism is open to far more honest application than it receives in the Soviet Union.

All the more so, if we reflect on a second line of argumentation suggested but not developed in Part I of this paper. Even if there *were* some logical incompatibility between portraying reality truthfully and portraying socialist reality in a favourable light, that would not require us to conclude that socialism cannot in general be promoted by genuinely realistic art. For portraying socialist reality in a favourable light is only *one* among many conceivable ways of promoting socialism—albeit the one now sanctified by use in the USSR. What of other approaches? What of art which educates by truthfully depicting the *evils* of some aspect of existing socialist reality, thereby to aid in the future elimination of these evils (and consequent improvement in socialism)? What of art which, through the truthful portrayal of everyday situations, communicates, Tolstoy-wise, simple feelings of brotherhood and harmony without political colouration? Might not such art make some contribution to a truly fraternal socialism?

For exploring such approaches, artists in the USSR today are visited with professional and legal penalties. But these penalties are imposed not by the theory of socialist realism but by the decisions of political leaders to enforce a constricted and stultified version of the theory of socialist realism. If the decisions should for any reason change substantially (say, through the accession to power of a Communist party leader with good taste), more capacious versions of socialist realism could easily be implemented without any fundamental dislocation in the concepts or principles of Marxist theory.

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[2] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

[3] Albert Camus, *Discours de Suède* (1958), pp. 47–8.

[4] See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Literature and Art: Selections from Their Writings* (1947).

[5] *Pravda*, May 6, 1934.

[6] M. F. Ovsyannikov and V. A. Razumny (eds.), *Kratky slovar' po estetike* (Brief Dictionary of Aesthetics) (Moscow, 1964), p. 335.

[7] Monroe C. Beardsley, *Aesthetics from Classical Greece to the Present: A Short History* (1966), p. 360.

[8] M. Rosenthal and P. Yudin (eds.), *A Dictionary of Philosophy* (Moscow, 1967), p. 379 (italics added).

[9] Maxim Gorky, 'On Socialist Realism,' in *Socialist Realism in Literature and Art: A Collection of Articles* (Moscow, 1971)' p. 45.

[10] I am indebted to Professor Hongor Oulanoff for this story.

[11] In the case of selection as a method of favourable portrayal a stronger conclusion is warranted: here the demand for socialism, far from being logically incompatible with the demand for realism, is in fact logically dependent upon the latter demand, since as we have seen the same selectivity that makes a portrayal truly realistic (given the socio-historical theories of the socialist realist) also fits the portrayal to promote socialism. In this case the two demands in effect reduce to one—true realism (which *is* socialist realism). For clarification on this and other points I am indebted to critical comments on this paper by my colleagues William G. Lycan and Bernard Rosen.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF ART: SOME MYTHS

John L. Harrison

IN HIS *The Limitations of Science*[1] J. W. N. Sullivan writes that the artist increases our consciousness or awareness of ourselves, our fellow creatures and the material universe. The great artist 'extends and subtilizes certain elements of our experience and so gives us greater knowledge and mastery of life.' I would like to question whether that is so and if so, to what degree it is true.

One of our first questions must be of what precisely it is that the artist makes us aware. For while it may seem to be illuminating to state that 'the ultimate justification of any intellectual activity is its effect in increasing our awareness or degree of consciousness', there is no *prima facie* reason why an increase of awareness should be good, or should always be good. Certainly many people have argued that the increase of consciousness afforded by particular exercises, *e.g.* submission to the writings of pornographers or a careful study of criminal activity, is not worth while. It is reasonable to go further and ask why an increase of awareness should be held to be intrinsically good. In certain cases of mental illness a decrease of awareness is held to be good in terms of the total life adjustment of the individual. Lobotomies and drugging of various kinds are performed on this ground as well as on the specific ground of relieving pain.

In the last analysis many of those who argue that an increase of consciousness is intrinsically good rest their case on a metaphysic or religious faith under which it is held that there is a benign purpose evident in the universe, the continuing search after which is self-evidently worth while as part of the justification bestowed by a purposive evolutionary process which strives towards ever augmented consciousness. None of these faiths or their so-called entailments is self-evident, however, or logically necessary. It can just as reasonably be argued that man finds himself alive and capable of relieving the tedium and pain of living, and therefore does so in his own best interest. Or a nihilist might argue that since hope is a fraud,

the canon should be self-slaughter. Machiavelli, as Herbert Butterfield pointed out in *The Origins of Modern Science*,[2] took the conventional view that man was in general everywhere and always the same. There had been no progress since the Greeks—there had even been a falling off or decadence—and this was compatible with a notion of cyclic process on a base of unchanging human nature. In our own day the neo-Aristotelians combine with the psychoanalysts, the ecologists and the fundamentalist young to decry the idea of progress. For these people there is no cause in time itself which makes ever-ascending improvement the rubric under which all creation moves, any more than there is in the Buddhist or Christian stories as distinct from the faith.

Certainly it is a feasible and widely held view that man structures his own value systems and consequent activities and institutions in an attempt to impose some kind of order on his social and personal life and that while it is true that nature appears to 'obey scientific laws', there is no necessary entailment from this to his own moral case. Under this view an increase of consciousness would be held to be good if it appeared to serve, or at any rate not to hinder, his moral ends, *i.e.* his self-designed personal and social ends, and if it did not serve these ends it would not be held to be good. For example, if an increase of consciousness proved to bestow little else but pain and misery, alienation and loneliness, it would not be held to be good. In such a case any talk of the universe being purposeful, or of evolution having demonstrated its purpose of evolving higher and more inclusive consciousness, would either be criticized as irrelevant or rejected, perhaps on emotional grounds, as fallacious or undemonstrable.

Given this view, then, an increase in consciousness will be held to be good if and only if it serves the self-designed personal and social ends of man, or does not hinder those ends. From a sybaritic point of view, indeed, it might be argued that if an increase of consciousness could not be seen to serve man's self-designed personal and social ends, it could not be counted as good even though it might not appear to hinder those ends. To deal with this sophistication of argument it will be necessary to ask ourselves precisely what this increase of consciousness might be that can be measured by man as serving or not serving his self-designed best interests.

It might appear on the face of it that this increase of consciousness is to be conceived of in relation to its service of the self-designed ends of man. So that it too is an arbitrary construct and reflects the needs of man as he sees them. That is, under this view there is no idea of 'increase of consciousness' laid up in heaven, no absolute after which the dim perceptions of man must model his own sense of it. Increase of consciousness, then,

might realistically be conceived of in relation to specific kinds of perceiving and knowing, as in the arts, physics, or water skiing. My consciousness is increased atomistically, no matter what confluences of ideation follow, and increased only in relation to the structures of the world thrown up by man. Let us examine this notion with respect to the achievement of one or two artists.

Gordon S. Haight, the distinguished editor of George Eliot's work, reported an historian as having stated that the novel *Middlemarch* contained the finest portrait he knew of England at the time of the Reform Bill.[3] He might have added of the human heart, since George Eliot mapped the psychology and morality of human kind as surely and inclusively as a contemporary cartographer maps a contoured terrain. Our consciousness of the dimensions of man and of human society is extended and deepened by the reading of *Middlemarch*. Yet this is not to say that the novel demonstrates either that the universe is transcendentally purposive or that increased awareness is the appropriate actualization of evolution's potential. In an important sense all that George Eliot can be said to demonstrate through her novel is her own genius, and her readers' responsiveness to *Middlemarch* is nothing more necessarily than a function of that genius. It is true that we learn much about the world by means of what I shall call *information analogues*.

> The world of the novels of Balzac is not the real world, but by choosing to regard the novels as information analogues of a crude sociological kind we can acquire all sorts of knowledge which will help us to understand not only nineteenth century France but also to some degree our own world.[4]

But this is not to say that the artist offers us certain knowledge of the real world. George Eliot claimed that through art we learn much of the development of 'the gradual action of ordinary causes',[5] and she would have had in mind principally human motivation. We can accede to this with the proviso that the 'causes' take place in an invented world, where if there is universal purpose it is the creation of the artist as much as is the human motivation. In fact, as I have argued elsewhere,[6] the artist's audience is an aesthetic construct, the work of the poem, novel or musical composition. The identification of the reader is not made in his own person as it is when committed to moral action in daily life. 'His response is in the main an emotional one in the unreal world of his vicarious readership.'

The artist is a superb con man, although as compared to most entertainers his entertainment is of considerably greater intrinsic value. It is of value because, as stated above, it intimates in telling forms real possibilities of human conduct and imagining which are derived from a close and highly sensitive reading of human affairs and the human mind. His

world is still an imitation and our participation in it is vicarious in the sense that it is not life such as when we pay the milkman or fall in love. But he provides us through the power of the form with a sense of significance which we feel compelled to take seriously. But for all that it is a con game. Take Thomas Carew's poem *To A. L. Perswasions to Love.* It is entirely conventional in its theme and imagery, vocabulary and earnestness. Its theme is the brevity of youth and beauty, and thus the wisdom of enjoying love while we may. There are literally thousands of poems throughout the ages and in many cultures which preach the same sentiment, although in Carew's time in the first half of the seventeenth century there was a plethora of Caroline lyric work about this theme. Many of the poets translated one another in part, as did Carew in his very free translation in part of this poem from a lyric by Marino. But there is a greatness of effect in Carew's *To A. L.* that moves it beyond the level of even most of Herrick and Lord Herbert. There is a pulsation as of truth in the relentless rhythm and charge of the tetrameter; the images seem to be inevitable, the sentiment touches on the tragic so that we feel we are, by the poet's design on us, moved behind the rhetorical presentation of a seduction piece to a profound and poignant statement about the human condition. After a conventional lead-in of twenty-eight lines the energy and genius of the insight and depth of feeling take over:

> Nor let brittle beautie make
> You your wiser thoughts forsake:
> For that lovely face will faile,
> Beautie's sweet, but beautie's fraile;
> 'Tis sooner past, 'tis sooner done
> Then Summers raine, or winters Sun;
> Most fleeting when it is most deare,
> 'Tis gone while wee but say 'tis here.
> These curious locks so aptly twind,
> Whose every haire a soule doth bind,
> Will change their abroun hue, and grow
> White, and cold as winters snow.
> That eye which now is *Cupids* nest
> Will proue his grave, and all the rest
> Will follow; in the cheeke, chin, nose
> Nor lilly shall be found nor rose. . . .
> For when the stormes of time have mou'd
> Waves on that cheeke which was belou'd
> When a faire Ladies face is pin'd
> And yellow spred, where red once shin'd,
> When beauty, youth, and all sweets leave her,
> Love may returne, but lover never. . . .

The urgency of realization is totally represented in the poetry, which reverberates with the sense of the power, omnipresence and finality of death common to medieval and Renaissance art: *Timor mortis conturbat me.* It had a lot to do with religion, it had much to do with the plagues and the short life-expectancy; it had also to do with an inherited Epicureanism; and its composition in beautiful and undying forms of art had to do with European culture's imprimatur of art. There was no doubt in the poet's mind that as a poet he was about important business universally acknowledged to be such by educated men, nor that the fading or failing of beauty represented for educated men throughout Europe the pathos of the human condition. There is a finality in the Carew poem which drives home the stake of conviction concerning the sisterhood of beauty and death, beauty and wasting, and it is the forceful quality of the art by means of which this conviction is mediated which persuades us as, hopefully, it persuaded his mistress.

But to attest to the power of art is not to attest to anything more than our liability to its seduction. In it there is neither necessarily truth nor religion. The universe does not necessarily sit as Carew or George Eliot or Mozart appear to intimate—although what they are intimating is nothing more nor less than *their own* formal universe of meaning and value. It is not the real world behind appearances that art *pictures foorth* for us. The extension of consciousness bestowed by art is greater consciousness of the world subsumed by the work of art. Sullivan's statement that art 'gives us greater knowledge and mastery of life' is true only in the sense that the 'life' of which we gain a deeper understanding is that depicted by the artist. And metaphorically it is at second remove from reality as Plato held (but not *like* he held) because the intimation of the artist derives from the positings and postulates, hypotheses and laws, thrown up by man in an attempt to create for himself a sensible haven within the cosmos of the unknown. The objection to Plato's view must rest on the rejection of a transcendental reality; but this does not disallow the contention that the artist works his specific inventions up from generic inventions which while having been granted validity by public conference are nevertheless inventions.

One of the difficulties with most theories and philosophies of art is that they presuppose transcendental truth and absolute existences. What I have been drawing attention to is that the work of art represents only what man has made, both in the sense of his workaday constructs and in the sense of the artist's inventions based on them, and that what man has made is not nature, not reality, not transcendental truth. On the one hand scientific laws are approximations of how the universe seems on

available evidence to hang together; and we guide our activities accordingly with a fair expectation of not running across frequent exceptions to the theory. On the other hand the work of art intimates a world of the heart; its intimations as to what is significant are often more inclusive where they touch on human affairs than are the laws of science, but they are imprecise and lack grounding in the rigorous marshalling of substantiating evidence. It is for this reason that the work of art cannot be held to provide evidence of progress of some kind in evolution or nature any more than it gives us proof of the existence of forests, galactic systems or a human penchant for doing good or ill.

There is no need, in any case, for the art theorist or philosopher of art to have recourse to transcendental truth-explanations of how art comes to move men and in what respect it is significant. 'Life is of no consequence if a formidable eagerness to widen its frontiers does not stamp within its confines,' Ortega y Gasset has written. Very well; but this asks for no more than dedication to search for meaning. The artist can be allowed to be searching for his own meaning. In *To A. L.* Carew, operating from a specific base of European consciousness concerning beauty and its wasting, rose to a height of feeling which in catalysing his superb craftmanship produced a most persuasive form of his feeling and associated ideation. But that is all, and it is enough. One cannot deduce or otherwise draw from the poem any demonstration that the 'meaning of life' is an ever-augmenting consciousness, or that evolution 'intends' such 'growth', or that in the making of a poem feelings are transmuted into truths. All that is necessarily true about the poet's feelings is that they have existed in some form probably similar on many occasions—although not always—to those which the poem calls up in the reader. And what is 'true' about art is the existence of its form. But there is no realm of spiritual truth that is being tapped every time an artist is at work. What the novel *Middlemarch* meant for one historian was an invention which intimated something of what England might have been like at the time of the Reform Bill. Another historian, particularly one of a Tory or of an extreme Whiggish persuasion, would not have agreed. But Eliot's novel provides us with an entertainment, whether or not based on real events and a fine reading of the ethos of a time and place, an entertainment where simulacra of men and historical movements are identified and manipulated purely within the aesthetic form of the novel, for appreciation within an ambit of awareness called by Edward Bullough 'esthetic consciousness'.

Probably a major cause of the failure both to attend to aesthetic features and to confound them with aspects of use, purpose or gain is the materialistic and pragmatic character of Western culture. Educationists,

in an effort to squeeze aesthetic matters into the curriculum, are driven in desperation (often combined with ignorance) to plead the utility of art education whether practical or theoretical. That where it exists in schools and colleges it is largely the former will surprise no one, since the concept of *education* generally connotes in our culture preparation for a career, *i.e.* for practical application in the world.[7] This is also the explanation why it is so often argued that art has desirable moral attributes and effects, and why the proposition that pornography and violence in art are bad is so often central to the discussion of art's role in society. As if art had a professional function in the main like that of doctors and engineers. Whereas art has only the function of being itself, no matter what ethnological, linguistic or historical interest accrues to it. The truth of the matter is that art *per se* has no use, that its contemplation delights man, and that frivolity and joy are as important to man as to the gods who are said to have created the world and then contemplated it and found it to be good. But if an educationist argued in this way, art would be stricken from the curriculum in favour of more physics or games on the grounds that the latter trained mind and body respectively, and even character, and were therefore of use in careers, the military, and the preservation of morality. This state of affairs leads, then, as I say, to the attribution to aesthetic matters of truth, goodness and utility, and quite earnest discussions and full-blown theories are built up in defence of it. Governments become concerned about the morality of art, and examination questions on literature and painting refer to character, plot line, morals, and feelings rather than to form and rhythm. The cultural result is a barbarousness in our artifacts, a heaviness in our manners, and a neglect of all art worth the name by the majority of the population—not because the majority are lacking in education but because they are not educated men with a cultivated aesthetic sensibility and a balanced sense of the proper objects of human attention. Fortunately for art, as T. S. Eliot observed, it requires not a large but only a significant audience.

Finally, art in itself is not only of little moral use or truth use or financial gain—art *per se* is not translatable into dollars; *quâ* art neither is it to be justified on the grounds of conferring pleasure. The obverse of the traditional Puritan depreciation of art is the negative Puritan attribution of it as pleasurable. It was in part because it was held to be pleasurable that art was condemned, therefore the attribution to it of pleasure was essential. This comes from as far back as the early Church Fathers, and is complementary to their moral preoccupations. In fact it is in cultures which are legalistically and conventionally moralistic that one finds, as one would expect, most made out of the argument that art is pleasurable. 'Don't

put your daughter on the stage, Mrs. Worthington" is of a piece with the Elizabethan injunctions against travelling performers and the general cynicism with which the lives of film personalities are viewed today. The context in which the arts of drama and dance were noted in the sixteenth century requires no comment: '. . . revelling, epicurism, wantonesse, idlenesse, dancing, drinking, stage-plaies, masques, and carnall pompe and jollity.' The twentieth century's preoccupation with pornography in the arts is precisely the same thing. It is of a piece, as I say, with the obverse moral approbation of the 'serious' productions which are held to be 'good for you'—the plays of Ionesco and Pinter appearing on television is an example, or the prestige which accrues to publishers for producing the occasional book of poetry. Such a judgement is of a kind with that of a Shelley, a Matthew Arnold or a Tolstoy: art reveals and disposes to truth, goodness, beauty and even political probity. Most of mankind in the West, however, plump for the justification that art pleases and relaxes and is thereby good for you like acupuncture, centrefolds of *Playboy* and *Cosmopolitan*, and the analyst's couch.

The argument is unfortunately non-aesthetic, and it is but a step from reading for pleasure—pleasure is good for you—to reading for self-improvement (the emphasis on utility), and on to the final theology that art contains truth or is true and reflects or presents the purposiveness in the universe. Similarly we find the proposition that aesthetics is the study of beauty taken to mean almost by tautology the study of what is good for you; beauty finds its justification in being pleasurable, useful and morally circumspect. This is a quite unwarranted didactic interpretation of the sense of beauty, and in any case it is only within such an unthinking convention that beauty can be believed always to be pleasurable or have pleasure as its primary attribute, and its opposite, ugliness, always, presumably, painful.

The fact is, however, that art is significant when it is significant, or it is nothing. It may or may not confer pleasure; a deliberately didactic interpretation of it may induce us to think that it is a positive moral force, although the morality is in the interpretation; it may or may not be useful, but here again it is useful if it is made useful, as in selling reproductions for profit. This much is akin to the Kantian view as stated in *The Critique of Judgment* that the aesthetic activates or potentially activates our cognitive faculties, and in doing so provides pleasure.

> The pleasure we experience in the free and successful exercise of a skilled faculty excited to a condition of exceptional alertness is a different thing from the sensuous pleasure of say, smelling a rose. It is consequent upon, not constitutive of, appreciation. . . .[8]

Art is its own world, can excite our curiosity and give rise to a sense of significance. The extrapolation from the everyday world of the justificatory myths of use, goodness, truth, beauty, pleasure, and increase of consciousness of purpose in the universe, is beside the point.

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[1] J. W. N. Sullivan, *The Limitations of Science* (1949), chapter 8.

[2] H. Butterfield, *The Origins of Modern Science* (1968), chapter 12.

[3] *Middlemarch* (ed. G. S. Haight) (1956), p. vi.

[4] J. L. Harrison, 'Cognitive aspects of aesthetic response', P.E.S. (USA) *Proceedings* (1971), p. 267.

[5] Letter to John Blackwood, 24 July 1871, cit. G. S. Haight, *The George Eliot Letters*, 7 vols. (1954–55), II, 168.

[6] J. L. Harrison, 'G. H. Bantock, Literature, and Moral Education', *J. Aesth. Ed.*, 4, 3 (July, 1970), 52.

[7] The distinction between school and university treatment of art on the grounds that the latter concerns itself with the theoretical is a fiction. How many undergraduates have concerned themselves with aesthetics, or even known what its purview is? For the most part they study the play, poem or painting as technique—when, that is, they are not doing canvases in Fine Arts programmes or writing novels for degrees.

[8] H. Osborne, *The Art of Appreciation* (1970), p. 40.

nor will, nor pursue his own happiness but for the possession of faculties which necessarily give him an interest out of himself in the happiness of others; that personal identity neither does, nor can imply any positive communication between a man's future, and present self.'[6]

It is this peculiar futuristic thrust of the imagination that underlies Hazlitt's approach to *Romeo and Juliet* and his judgement concerning the success of the play, and that has not been adequately noted by students of the critic. His more general remarks about the play reveal, of course, a good deal of the enthusiastic response and the spirit of evocation that characterize his admiration of Shakespearian drama. 'Nature', he says in describing his response to the play, 'seems to put forth all its freshness; and the heart throbs with the full weight of joy, too soon changed to woe. The golden cup of pleasure, mantling to the brim, is dashed with bitterness: the intoxicating draught of youth, of hope, of love, drowning and ravishing the sense, is suddenly turned to poison.'[7] There is, however, as is so often the case in Hazlitt's approach to literature, a more systematic and analytic attempt to understand the special pleasure conveyed by the drama and its characters, and this attempt is very much rooted in Hazlitt's conception of the futuristic and anticipatory powers of the imagination. Shakespeare, he contends, has not shown any real kinship with Renaissance or indeed with eighteenth-century ideas of the role of imagination. As Hazlitt puts it, 'Shakespeare has not followed nature, which existed in his time, as well as now. The modern philosophy, which reduces the whole theory of the mind to habitual impressions, and leaves the natural impulses of passion and imagination out of the account, had not then been discovered; or if it had, would have been little calculated for the uses of poetry.'[8] Such a philosophy, and its inability to explain the intensity and magic of our earliest experiences, occasioned Wordsworth's Platonic answer to the problem of the *Immortality Ode*, an answer which Hazlitt deems unsatisfactory. 'It is not from the knowledge of the past that first impressions of things derive their gloss and splendour, but from our ignorance of the future, which fills the void to come with the warmth of our desires, with our gayest hopes, and brightest fancies.'[9] It is this ignorance of the future and the anticipation that accompanies it that is so true to the nature of things and that goes such a long way toward an understanding of the emotional states of Romeo and Juliet. Theirs are lives not of reminiscence but of vital anticipation kindled by the deeply sympathetic qualities of the imagination. Shakespeare, in Hazlitt's conception, 'has founded the passion of the two lovers not on the pleasures they had experienced, but on all the pleasures they had not experienced. All that was was to come of life was theirs. At that untried source of promised

happiness they slaked their thirst, and the first eager draught made them drunk with love and joy. . . . Desire has no limit but itself. Passion, the love and expectation of pleasure, is infinite, extravagant, inexhaustible, till experience comes to check and kill it.'[10] Romeo and Hamlet, although very different characters in many ways, are alike in the character of their imaginations. 'Both are absent and self-involved, both live out of themselves in a world of imagination. Hamlet is abstracted from everything; Romeo is abstracted from every thing but his love, and lost in it.'[11]

It is this conviction that 'Desire and imagination are inmates of the human breast',[12] that the sympathetic quality and futuristic orientation of the human imagination can be a source of great moral and aesthetic beauty, that serves as the fundamental premise of Hazlitt's perceptive and memorable observations on *Romeo and Juliet*.

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[1] See especially Elisabeth Schneider, *The Aesthetics of William Hazlitt* (Philadelphia, 1933); Herschel Baker, *William Hazlitt* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962); W. P. Albrecht, *Hazlitt and the Creative Imagination* (Lawrence, Kansas, (1965); Walter J. Bate, *Criticism: The Major Texts* (New York and Burlingame, 1952), pp. 281–92.

[2] *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. P. P. Howe (London and Toronto, 1930-34), II, 124, All references to Hazlitt's criticism are to this text.

[3] II, 126.

[4] II, 147.

[5] I, 1–2.

[6] I, 7.

[7] IX, 81.

[8] IV, 250.

[9] IV, 250.

[10] IV, 249.

[11] IV, 254.

[12] IV, 250.

GOODMAN AND THE 'NAÏVE' VIEW OF REPRESENTATION

David Pole

> To a complaint that his portrait of Gertrude Stein did not look like her, Picasso is said to have answered, "No matter, it will". Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art*, p. 33.

I BEGIN with this quotation from Goodman's brilliant book not only because it is amusing like so much else that he writes, but also because it is patently false—assuming, as we are plainly meant to, that he endorses what he quotes. At least, with the passage of some fifty years, the process shows no sign of getting under way. One may, I think, be legitimately suspicious in such cases; one may be suspicious of views that lend themselves to this sort of summing-up and score their rhetorical point precisely by flouting credulity (like Tertullian's famous dictum concerning the Trinity).

But perhaps we shall do better to proceed in more orderly style, to begin further back. 'To resemble' in ordinary daily speech—say I am talking of physical things—most often means not 'to be like' but 'to look like'. I am struck by some resemblance and remark on it: what I mean, then, on our normal presumption, will be a visual resemblance—which may be loose usage but is actual. Now philosophers who rightly watch linguistic points and are themselves careful to use words precisely also need to do so self-consciously. Otherwise they risk mistaking commonsense for naïveté, hence reading in one way words that are meant in another; or rather, to speak more accurately, that would be so meant supposing commonsense were not only, as it often is, sensible but also consciously articulate. That, I think, or something like it, has happened on the very first page of Goodman's book, where he speaks dismissively of 'the most naive view of representation'—one, I suggest, that turns out, sympathetically looked at, to be a most sensible view. Of this view he gives the following rough formulation: 'A represents B if, and only if, it resembles B'; or again, as an alternative, 'to the extent that it resembles

B'. This, evidently, is meant only as a first shot; on any terms, as he himself recognizes, it stands in need of refinement. But, I think, as a first shot it does pretty well, at least as expressing the commonsense view—if you like, the naïve view. But then the word 'resemble' must be read 'naïvely', too, not sophisticatedly as I think Goodman reads it. (Later he seems unsure or inclined to vacillate; we find him writing of the possibility of an artist's copying how 'the object is *or looks*'. (Op. cit., p. 7. My italics.) But that hesitant disjunction, anyway forgotten at once, does little to help. Indeed, the rest of the paragraph, as we shall shortly see, proves pretty bewildering.)

Goodman devotes his first dozen pages or so to demolishing the view in question, 'the naïve view', a task he tackles with self-confidence and considerable zest. Self-confidence in philosophers often makes for enjoyable reading (examples spring to mind) yet assessed seriously, surely, is a questionable virtue. A little brisk and determined good sense is unlikely to prove sufficient equipment to conjure away the obstinately intractable problems of this, our strange discipline. But then, surely, Goodman never thought so, or gave the impression of thinking so. In finding or setting himself problems, that is to say, he never gave the impression of underestimating them. I conclude, then, that he really thinks the 'resemblance' theory self-evidently foolish. And those who champion it are to be knocked out in round one and with a few quick jabs to the jaw. Hence, perhaps, something uncharacteristically cavalier in the conduct of his argument.

I do not mean to prejudge the substantial issue. Can such a theory ultimately stand, or stand without major qualification? I do not know, but it is more than I mean to argue for. I am sure of this, that it can stand in face of far more punishment than Goodman has so far delivered. More important, its basic approach is sound and relevant; the resemblance theorist, in other words, has his eye on the target, which I do not find self-evidently true of Professor Goodman. The target, of course, is visual art and specifically pictorial representation (I use the word broadly to include sculpture, but not literature; and leave open any questions of its significant connexion with representation of other sorts).

The first formulation, to repeat, is no more than that and can hardly be meant to be. Goodman accordingly seeks for ways of qualifying or amending it. But he treats the search summarily. His real view, which he is at no pains to disguise, is that no plausible qualification is available—though, strange as it seems, he himself offers one, and in the next breath; one which, in all essentials, does pretty well. But first we need to look at his objections: why, amended or otherwise, is the naïve view dismissed

as untenable? Resemblance, unlike representation, is a symmetrical relation, and also reflexive. A portrait of the Duke of Wellington represents and, according to 'the naïve view', resembles him; if so, he also resembles the portrait. Since, obviously, he does not represent his own portrait, it follows resemblance by itself cannot furnish a sufficient condition of representation—a possible claim, I suppose, but a large one, which, as far as I know, no-one ever made for it. Clearly it may still be a necessary condition. But let me take another point first. It is one that Goodman presently touches on, without high-lighting; which, however, I find convenient to make explicit from the start. To talk of resemblance, and talk of it significantly, we need to talk specifically too. Otherwise anything will resemble anything. That is to say, we need to limit ourselves to some aspect either actually specified or understood. Now some such limitation is implicit in the amendment Goodman himself suggests to the first formulation quoted above; he suggests the further clause 'If A is a picture . . .' 'Resemblance', we noted, in ordinary idiom, means resemblance in appearance. What concerns us, then, is only this: not what things are but how they look. Secondly, what concerns us are pictures, as Goodman's own suggestion implies. The two things go together; for pictures are made to be looked at—which, if nothing else, will serve to dispose of Goodman's first problem of asymmetry. The picture may resemble the Duke, and the Duke—quite symmetrically—the picture. The qualifying clause does the rest. Wellington doubtless was a fine figure of a man. But no one would literally assert that he was made to be looked at. Hence no absurdity arises. Suppose a fellow Londoner or a visitor to London should ask me what Wellington looked like. One might answer; 'Read the books, descriptions survive'. But that would sound oddly indirect. The best way to discover is by looking, which is also the simplest—not indeed at the Duke himself, whose features are no longer to be seen. Yet men may look again, if not on his like, on his likeness. Goya's great portrait in the National Gallery, being no mere description but a resemblance, an authentic image, outdoes any record in words.[1]

Our account of resemblance, however, is still insufficiently specific. I spoke of things made to be looked at. Our concern strictly speaking, however, need not be confined to what they were originally made for; what matters is not their initial purpose but their present role. Objects in principle might serve us as pictures and be looked at accordingly, regardless of their makers' intentions. Even of *objets trouvés* the same could be true. For the rest what we find is the same paradoxical situation. Goodman himself seems to supply—substantially if not exactly—the further specification the theory needs. Indeed for its principal assailant

he would appear remarkably ready with the essentials of its support. We began simply by imagining two objects each resembling the other. Now we find next that where the first is a picture—here of course salvaging Goodman's own discarded suggestion—it does more than resemble the second; it serves to represent it as well. Since pictures, to repeat, are to be looked at, our interest is confined to appearance; the resemblance is resemblance in appearance. And for the next point: a copyist, Goodman shortly adds—in his terminology 'the copy theory' is merely another name for the resemblance theory (a disastrous equation, but I waive this point for the present)—will not copy any aspect at random: 'rather, we may suppose, the way the object looks' (one notes the crucial concession made, it seems, unaware) 'to a normal observer at a proper distance . . . in a good light . . .' (Op. cit., p. 7.) I shall shortly return to finish the quotation. So far it seems perfectly unexceptionable. Commonsense can have little to add. But one small point we should notice for the sake of accuracy: the conditions, strictly, need not be normal so long as they are known. For the rest I can find nothing to object to. And as to the example I have been using, Goya, one may suppose, did just that—or so the picture itself would suggest.

The same holds if we switch our attention from the relation of the artist and sitter to that of picture and viewer; from Wellington and Goya to the object in the gallery and oneself. The finished picture plainly enough is also to be seen from an appropriate distance—a point, incidentally, that we might have learnt from Hume. Hume, it is true, has nothing to say about lighting, which he may have felt he could safely take for granted. No resemblance theorist, as far as I know, has ever advocated looking at works of art in total darkness; though a possible exercise of ingenuity would be to produce a work that required a green light, or purple light, for its resemblance to its original to appear.

'A represents B if and only if A resembles B'. Such was the original formula, which, with certain small qualifications, I suggest will now yield pretty much what we need. First, A is made to be looked at, and secondly to be looked at on that account. To look at a picture *qua* picture is to look at it as the likeness of some original—which distinguishes a picture from a replica, even the sort of exact replica that Goodman likes to hold up to ridicule. For, as we saw, he identified 'resemblance theory' with 'the copy theory', a very different creature, suppose it exists at all. Imagine some expert or enthusiast who makes a perfect model, say of Stevenson's Rocket or Puffing Billy. He might make it to be exhibited in a museum; hence make it, apparently, specifically to be looked at. Further *being*, by hypothesis, just like the original, it will also look like it. But it is not

to be looked at on that account, or rather not merely on that account. Or suppose it should be; then, if so, it is a representation, or serves merely as a representation, not—what Goodman wants—as a replica. The upshot, given Goodman's premises, is not without its irony. Even 'copy' theorists are right in a way. For an exact replica, and precisely in virtue of its resemblance, its visual resemblance to the original, may serve in special circumstances as—perhaps more, perhaps less than a replica—a representation. To return to the Duke: it is doubly evident, I suppose, that he was not made to be looked at—in the context we should perhaps say 'begotten'—in virtue of his future likeness to the portrait that Goya was to paint.

I have undertaken the defence of naïveté or, as I prefer to call it, commonsense. I find for myself that I understand the notion of likeness, which I meet every day, rather better than the jargon word 'denotation'; at least in this logical setting—rather the lack of any setting—in which Goodman in his handling of the latter contrives to imprison it, one might say in the confinement of vacancy. You can suffocate in a vacuum no less effectively than in a tomb; excess of liberty and too little are alike. But as to his objection to his own excellent suggestion, namely the crucial clause: 'If A is a picture . . .' what he writes is as follows: 'if picture means "representation" it will not help'. Presumably it will be circular. But, he goes on, 'if we construe it broadly enough to cover all paintings' it will be 'wide of the mark in other ways'. Here I must confess to being lost, and I fear I must have missed the drift of the argument. 'All paintings', as against representations, would suggest, say, Mondrians, Pollocks and other such proliferating objects and entities. In fact what he goes on to discuss is precisely an old-style representation, a Constable picture of Marlborough Castle, so that what follows, however interesting in itself, seems unconnected with what went before.

It is still well worth looking at on its own account, however. Constable's picture, Goodman writes, 'is more like any other picture than it is like the Castle, yet it represents the Castle not another picture . . . not even the closest copy'. This last point is evidently a nice one. I shall return to it. But as to the rest, our previous distinction seems to serve. The canvas is to be seen as a picture; hence what matters is its looking like the Castle—looking, not being, to repeat. We can rewrite Goodman's sentence accordingly: 'The picture *looks* more like any other picture than it *looks* like the Castle (as seen, of course, from the appropriate spot); yet it represents the Castle not another picture'.[1] Yet, perhaps, in a sense even that remains true. It depends on what resemblance is in question: for the notion of resemblance is one that functions differently, for instance,

from identity. If A is identical with B and B with C, then A is identical with C; that is, the relation is transitive. The same fails to hold of resemblance. It depends on what features one attends to. Suppose A resembles B, say, in respect of shape, and B in respect of colour resembles C; no further conclusion ensues. The resemblance theorist as we meet him in Goodman, however, is confined to looking, or trying to look, with an innocent eye. Hence, unsurprisingly, he comes to grief.

To return to the copy: the case here is undoubtedly more complex. At first sight the objection may look damaging and not only to Goodman's own target, the simple-minded dummy of a resemblance theorist he sets up to shy stones at. Our own emendation seems exposed to it too. For the copy, no less than the original, is made to be looked at: further to be looked at for this reason, for the sake of its resemblance to the original. Yet, I think, a significant difference remains. I do not speak of dealers and connoisseurs, I mean connoisseurs of copies and copyists. False teeth, to take an analogy, are made to serve as teeth, not as false teeth; in other words, they are false *faute de mieux*. What we value is, so to speak, their tooth-likeness, not their falseness. Yet, I said, the case presents some complexity. A copy, say, of the Titian portrait called 'An Englishman'—perhaps a real Englishman though unidentified—is valued for its resemblance to the original; that is, to the Titian, the artist being known, not to the sitter who is unknown. And of course there exist works of fancy; there need not be a real sitter at all. Yet the main point still stands. The Titian, to be seen as a portrait, *eo ipso* is seen as a likeness, the likeness of an object real or possible, but anyway existing independently. Now the point to notice is this; precisely the same holds of the copy. We shall look at it, not as a copy, but rather as what it strives to be, a picture so to speak in its own right; (except, as before, for connoisseurs of copies *qua* copies, who perhaps interest themselves in comparing the skill of different copyists.) A portrait, and a representation of any sort, is seen as resembling something else, something existing independently or at least something possibly so existing.

Let me speak, at least briefly, of mirroring. Certainly it is a notion to be handled with caution. Our prime interest of course is in resemblance, and what chiefly seems to need underlining is the distinctness, the non-identity, of the two. Apparently there are real dangers of confusing them, to which Goodman would seem to have succumbed. For Goodman, we find, slips to and fro between talk of 'resemblance' and 'the perfect copy'. Yet looking-glasses have something to teach us—quite apart from what they ordinarily show, to be acknowledged with complacency or other-

wise, that visual aspect that we present to the world. Suppose, before Marlborough Castle, just where Constable set up his canvas, we should instead set up a looking-glass, though we face it the other way round; and a second before Wivenhoe Park. Now here we have four different objects—the objects of our present concern all, to repeat, being appearances. The first is the appearance in the one glass, the second in the other; and next we have either original, the two appearances of the Castle and the Park. Let me rewrite Goodman's dictum a second time. 'The appearance of the first mirror (roughly the mirror image) is more like any other such appearance (any other mirror image) than it is like the visual appearance of the Castle, yet it represents the Castle, not the second image.' I fear this awkward recasting spoils the confident ring and rhythm of Goodman's prose—but, it seems to me, not only his prose. To pursue the point further. There *are* things that look like each other. Representations may not in general be mirror images, yet even perfect resemblances exist; mirror images are perhaps a subclass of representations. The objects we in fact hang in galleries may not be precisely of this sort; but though they are not, yet in principle they might have been. The account is doubtless false, but not nonsense. In other words the mere notion can hardly be incoherent or logically absurd, as Goodman would seem to imply.

Yet, I said, the point is a risky one to overplay. Take two similar triangles: they *are* alike, and hence normally look alike. (Or, one may imagine, two dissimilar ones might look alike from an appropriate angle; but the former example will serve.) Now here plainly there is no question of mirroring; they look alike only in shape, not in size. Mirroring and visual resemblance are different things, if partly overlapping; it is the more reason for keeping them apart. But one other phenomenon remains, another sort of likeness and of look, which we need to take account of; something rather different and more elusive—or so one may feel. We find that the same noun, namely 'look', has a further use. Let me take an example. Two people emerge from the inner room who differ in age, build and colouring, perhaps also in sex; yet have in common —what immediately strikes us—the same look, a strange ghastly look, of sickened bewilderment. (To-day, evidently, the Thing is visible in the inner room.) Or two landscapes that differ in every detail may share a look of deep, mellow repose. I called the phenomenon an elusive one; yet I do not know that we ought to be puzzled. We may be happier, which would doubtless be understandable, with things we can measure and check, can lay rulers against or run fingers along. Yet such descriptions are surely intelligible. We understand them and could hardly do without them—unless we are merely to ignore a large class of perceptual

phenomena. And these are phenomena, as it happens, of special importance in visual art.

But so far I have said nothing of Goodman's main argument, or what seems to be meant as his main argument. Resemblance theorists, as Goodman conceives them, are committed to 'the innocent eye'; which he constantly assumes though I find no grounds for it. I must return to the quotation I began earlier. The question was, to recall, what the 'copyist' is expected to copy; and, Goodman supposes, it will be, not just any aspect, but

> the way the object looks to the normal eye, at a proper range, from a favourable angle, in good light, without instrumentation, unprejudiced by affection or animosity or interest, and unembellished by thought or interpretation. In short, the object is to be copied as seen under aseptic conditions by the free and innocent eye. (Op. cit., p. 7)

This passage, I consider, is best taken slowly, notwithstanding the swift pace of Goodman's prose. I even feel a certain need to pause for breath. To look first at the form of the argument, seemingly meant, I said, as the main argument. Plainly it is a *reductio ad absurdum*. And it does certainly reach its end when we finally touch down amid absurdities, blatant absurdities, which, reasonably enough, Goodman relies on our rejecting. Yet, let us note, it all began quietly enough. It began with the artist at work, his vision being normal, as we should expect, his subject set before him at a proper range, in good light. Recall Goya's *Wellington*. In all that description there is no absurdity; it merely answers to the historical facts—or so the finished picture suggests. But the story now rapidly changes. Did Goya paint Wellington 'without affection, animosity or interest'?—a patriotic Spaniard, also a liberal, painting the successful commander of the British expeditionary force in the Peninsular. It seems unlikely, absurd if you like. And what comes next is quite plainly absurd, and plainly meant to be, namely an artist who looks at his sitter quite without 'thought or interpretation'. It is this time a conceptual absurdity. For perception in its nature involves thought, which I take to be knowable a *priori*. Last of all, summing up—'in short' is the phrase Goodman uses—the whole amalgum is equated with 'the free and innocent eye'. One may feel, I said, some need to pause for breath. Up till now we have had phrases in apposition. In these matters the syntactical rule—and I use the word as philosophers rarely seem to, to mean common *bona fide* syntax—is that clauses in apposition are identified. They either are roughly equivalent or anyway serve to specify the same thing. Now suppose we read Goodman accordingly; we must identify

normal vision in good light with the vision of the innocent eye—an absurdity certainly as gross as one could ask for. But who is supposed to be committed to it? If anyone, Goodman himself; not, certainly, the resemblance theorist. He himself appears then in the prepared seat where we had expected to see his victim. As to advocates of the innocent eye, they precisely contrast it with normal vision. And we shall find that any reasonably sophisticated resemblance theorist need have no truck with the latter notion at all; all he needs is the common notion that Goodman began with, precisely that of normal vision.

To return to the argument, however, the innocent eye is a myth. So Goodman asserts and, I think, rightly. He appeals to the authority of Professor Gombrich, (though Gombirch, one may note, however much he may insist on the slogan that 'making precedes matching', never tells us that it eliminates matching. He remains too sensible merely to scratch out the latter notion.) But perhaps I lay myself open to the charge of celebrating too easy a triumph. Goodman, I may be told, cannot seriously mean, deliberately intend, the equation his syntax suggests—though I confess I see no other way of reading the passage. Anyway we can concede the possibility, for otherwise he has no argument at all. The innocent eye is an irrelevance, at least for present purposes; resemblance theory has no need and no use for it. As to his other objections to the theory, these, if I am right, tell only against so simplistic a form of it that no serious resemblance theorist need be worried by them. Suppose we ask ourselves how the Duke looked to Goya. The answer is ready to hand, at least barring freakish assumptions. It was roughly as the portrait looks to us. But we know it is so, and indeed know of visual resemblances in general—whence our normal ability to read pictures—in virtue not of our innocent eyes but rather our shared sophistication.[3]

The process, one that begins pretty early in our culture at least, is eminently unmysterious; after all, we have all learnt to look at pictures. We have likewise learnt to look at people, a process that begins earlier still. Pictures, it is true, vary in kind; they make different demands on their viewers. Some assume more specialized equipment, familiarity with conventions or techniques. In looking at etchings. for instance, we do not complain of the absence of colour—though the example, perhaps, is a doubtful one. Colour is too easily dispensable. Say I see the Prime Minister on television, black-and-white television, and of course recognize him. That we still call it 'seeing' is significant. And pictorial conventions for the most part raise problems essentially similar. Denotation and reference are irrelevant. The case is merely this: we recognize known things in new guises—a pretty basic perceptual capacity. Without it—I mean

wholly in default of it—there would hardly be such a thing as perception at all. Yet, of course, conventions can matter. But where they do, happily we can also allow for them. And so with habits and modes of perception. Artists aim in general, not at anyone, but at competent viewers. Yet that is perhaps to misrepresent the point. A certain minimum of competence is presupposed in the very existence and viability of such activities, in the mere concept of representation. Even the simplest picture, say a drawing in a children's book, needs to be read and admits of being misread.

Goodman, then, seems to me right in rejecting 'the innocent eye'. The precise form of his argument leaves me less comfortable. The eye, he writes, so far from being innocent 'selects, rejects, discriminates . . .' and so on. (Op. cit. p. 8.) (Goodman always has an adequate supply of verbs and adjectives.) Perception, I said, involves thought; and the point is a conceptual not an empirical one. But to speak of relevant empirical fields: psychologically and physiologically, a rather different matter, perception must certainly be based on other processes, without which it cannot occur. The eye, in Goodman—which may mean the brain, retina and optic nerve—selects and discriminates: selects, then, from pre-existing material, discriminates among available data. We are to contemplate two things, it would seem, both process and product. And in the latter the raw materials are metamorphosed. What emerges, as he sees it, I think, is a kind of amalgum. Yet those materials, those data, if no longer accessible in fact, are still recognized in principle; they retain an essential place in the theory. They must still, so to speak, be pre-envisaged for the story to be intelligible at all. What goes into the omelette can come out. Now, on these terms, why should that be unthinkable; or if so, what sort of impossibility is in question? As to facts, as to natural necessities (if Goodman will allow such a notion), we can certainly grant it. In the frying pan the ingredients are transformed, which is a process not to be put into reverse. Yet, to begin with, let me repeat, there were and must have been such ingredients, which Goodman cannot consistently deny. His whole style of talking commits him to it. 'The myth of the innocent eye and the absolute given are unholy accomplices.' (Op. cit., p. 8.) The apothegm, of course, is his own and, I think, in form and content equally felicitous. Yet, as we see all too plainly, the apparition still troubles Goodman's thought; the absolute given has re-appeared for the innocent eye to stare back at. A different sort of exorcism would seem to be requisite. The myth otherwise will continue to haunt us, and miracles bear witness to its tomb.

Resemblance theory, if I am right, can stand against Goodman's utmost efforts so far. I have not said that it can stand against all comers. Indeed

my real suspicion is this: to deal with resemblance we need a different notion, that of seeing-as, which has figured much in recent discussion, (though Goodman says nothing of it). I confess that I would rather do without it; it looks too like a mere replica of what it is invoked to explain. But it may be that more can be said.[4] As to resemblance, it need not follow that it can merely be dropped and forgotten. We need it to fill another role, to provide foundations for a second concept that Goodman indeed takes account of but, I think, finds it no easy job to accommodate. I refer to that of realism or naturalism.

Let me briefly digress to discuss it. It would seem that his main inclination is merely to appeal to familiarity; a local representational tradition, familiar in a particular culture, is what members of the culture will call naturalistic. The approach, I shall seek to show, is riddled with difficulties; but the most obvious countermove is simply to compare theory with fact. Duccio or Picasso are nowadays quite as familiar to us as Vermeer, which, it seems, does nothing to make us call them equally naturalistic. But if not, it certainly gives us no reason for merely scrapping a useful and obvious distinction—one students of art find invaluable. Besides we read, too, in Goodman of 'rapid shifts' (op. cit., p. 33), of revolutions and departures from tradition that nonetheless earn acceptance. A tradition that departs from itself while remaining the same, departs incidently not gradually but abruptly—and perhaps, for why not, presently, like a subelectronic quantum, leaps back again—is a phenomenon I have difficulty in conceiving. The obvious question of course is 'shifts in what'? Not in familiar conventions; with the shift they precisely become unfamiliar. Nor again in tradition itself, unless tradition is to be defined, somewhat accommodatingly, as anything that either changes or remains the same. Nor lastly—the possibility that may have misled Goodman, for here, clearly, the thing happens—in representation or conventions of representation itself. For then these two notions, representation and naturalism, collapse into one, or at least any acceptable representational convention will *eo ipso* be naturalistic, too, which is empirically false. And even suppose it in fact is true: it would still be a risky prediction that acceptance could never be gained for non-naturalistic conventions.

Goodman has one further argument, perhaps his most ingenious one; though one whose consequences may prove more embarrassing to himself than his antagonist. He draws attention to a salient feature of representation and is, I believe, the first writer to have done so, which he calls representation-as. The point in different cases, he tells us, may either be a trivial or a substantial one. Trivially all representation is representation-as. Take Goodman's example: you may represent Churchill as an infant,

which he once was. Every picture must show something *as* something. But say a caricaturist depicts the adult Churchill as an infant: here you have non-trivial ('genuine' is Goodman's word) representation-as. Again you might show Churchill as a bull-dog, which he not only was not but could not be. Some war posters, if I recall, showed him as a pilot, which he was not in fact though he might have been. It would, I suppose, still be a case of genuine representation-as.

Goodman both poses the problem and sets out what he sees as its solution. We can classify pictures in two ways: either simply as objects of a given sort, perhaps—though not necessarily, and the point is important—in terms of their non-symbolic features, say shape, size or dominant colour; or, alternatively, in terms of what they represent or, as Goodman would have it, denote. But, I said, the classification of the former sort need not exclude what would normally be thought representational features—which for Goodman, I presume, are still symbolic ones. Pictures need not be of real things. But, for Goodman, Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne*, say, is not, as for most of us, a representation of two mythical beings (and, of course, a number more), of beings who never existed. It represents strictly nothing; or, more accurately, is not properly to be spoken of as representing at all. Yet we can still classify it, and in terms of its own intrinsic character. You have Bacchus pictures as you have bulldog or pilot pictures, which latter may or may not also denote Churchill. This is an unbreakable predicate; what we mean is strictly 'a bulldog picture', as we might say 'a square picture', not a picture representing a bulldog. 'Dogtooth moulding' is moulding of a certain distinctive pattern which we can recognize without referring to teeth.

I said that the point, though we grant its interest and importance, need create no trouble for resemblance theory. Clearly the same object can simultaneously look like more than one other, resemble both Churchill and a bulldog—probably in virtue of different features. And much the same goes for seeing-as; aspects are notoriously ambiguous. But, it may be asked, is not this simple answer over hasty? There seems to be a damaging objection. Goodman's account is devised to provide for a certain feature ascribable to representation-as, that the alternatives I have suggested omit, the feature being logical direction. One might argue as follows: it is one thing to represent Churchill as a bulldog, another to represent a bulldog as Churchill. The deficiency, if so, would be a serious one. But the reverse is true. Our account, certainly, makes no distinction, but for the best of possible reasons. There is none. The would-be objection, then, boomerangs on its proponents, and serves precisely to confirm the alternative view that it was aimed against. For if I am

right, to repeat, the theory yields precisely what it ought to yield, no distinction where none in fact exists.

Let me take an example. We have in our philosophical household a much loved and very recognizable bulldog, which we call Fido, like all good philosophers. Now you do a drawing of Fido, which is quite unmistakably Fido. But it is also unmistakably Churchill. Suppose we ask next whether the drawing represents Fido as Churchill or Churchill as Fido. The question is, as it should be, strictly unanswerable; I mean, as it should be on the resemblance theory, or a theory cast in terms of seeing-as, but not on Goodman's. As to the cartoonist's bulldog-Churchill, I dare say that the public at large, who recognize the defiant war leader, take the bulldog—perhaps wrongly—as merely generic.

For Goodman, I suggested, the point may prove trickier. A bulldog picture may represent Churchill; that presents no problem. But what of the case where the same object, here the same picture, represents not only two other further objects simultaneously but also either one as the other? There are of course ambiguous names. Occurring in a seventeenth-century history the name 'Churchill' might refer either to the future victor of Blenheim or the future war leader of the nineteen forties. Or let us, to pursue possibilities, name our bulldog, not Fido, but Churchill. The name is already ambiguous; the drawing denotes Churchill as Churchill either way. But what is it to denote A as B, or simultaneously A as B and B as A? These seem to me words without meaning.

REFERENCES

[1] It must not be thought that this argument trades illegitimately on the use of the word 'likeness' for portrait, though that use doubtless has its significance. Here we have one prominent object and the background is neutral. But take, say, a seventeenth-century townscape, perhaps representing the Piazza San Marco in Venice. It is the whole picture surface, viewed appropriately, that resembles the whole of the scene—or, to be explicit, its appearance.

[2] To be strictly accurate we should say 'like the *view*' from the point where the artist stood; for the likeness is general or comprehensive, though the Castle may be its prominent feature.

[3] A similar point is made by J. W. Manns, 'Representation, Relativism and Resemblance', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 11, 3, pp. 281–6.

[4] Roughly, I would argue, the possibility of perception in general, of the distinction of veridical and non-veridical, presupposes the capacity to see aspects, to see the same things in different ways.

BOOK REVIEWS

Le immagini e la realtà. By GIUSEPPE SERTOLI. La Nuova Italia. Florence. 1972. pp. 450. L. 4200.

THIS IS a book about Gaston Bachelard's theory of the imagination. Bachelard (1884–1962) had a considerable reputation as an epistemologist and philosopher of science, yet he is probably best known abroad as the philosophical mentor of such literary critics as Jean-Pierre Richard, Georges Poulet and Maurice Blanchot, who are representatives of one branch of the movement loosely called the *Nouvelle Critique*. It is Bachelard's theory of imagination which has influenced Richard and the others, and which generates the Bachelardian aesthetic.

Bachelard makes a traditional type of distinction between formal imagination and material imagination. The formal imagination is parasitic upon perception: it consists in the reproducing of what has already been seen and heard. Material imagination, on the other hand, occurs prior to perception—prior, indeed, to any other mental process—and it is this which Bachelard's theory of imagination is about. The material imagination is creative and productive. Its raw material is nature. Nature, when the human consciousness first encounters it, is nothing but a raw and shapeless chaos. The scientific consciousness resolves this shapeless mass into fixed, distinguishable objects, and it is these objects which constitute the 'real' world. The imaginative consciousness, however, resolves the shapeless mass into images, and these images constitute a world which is 'unreal', though it is 'unreal' only in the sense that it is not a product of the scientific consciousness. The scientific world, moreover, is a public and communal world, whereas imagination is private and subjective.

Whenever our minds are operating imaginatively we are in a state of consciousness which Bachelard calls *rêverie*. *Rêverie* has a dreamlike or oneirical character; but it is different none the less from *rêve*, for *rêverie* is active and creative whereas *rêve* is passive and self-negating. In dream the ego is absorbed into the thought; in the oneirical state of imaginative experience the ego remains in creative control of its material.

The most distinctive feature of Bachelard's theory of imagination is the internal structure which he claims to discover in it. He says that the imagination resolves the natural chaos of the world into images, not in an arbitrary and, as it were, infinitely variable manner, but rather in a finite number of fixed modes. He has analysed four of these, which correspond to the four elements of alchemy; fire, air, earth and water. In imagination, he claims, we experience the material world under one of these four species, and every image can thus be classified according to its species. All of this is in some ways akin to Jung. But there is one major item in Bachelard's theory which separates him decisively from Jung—quite apart from the fact that he does not care to speak of the unconscious mind—and this is his thesis that the imagination is verbal in character.

The dawning of consciousness, in imagination, is linguistic. *Rêverie* is *parole*. Literature is thus the most perfect embodiment of the imagination; indeed literature is not the outward expression of imagination but is itself the imagination in operation, the imagination at work in the open rather than in the privacy of one's mind. It is clear, then, that the imagination is aesthetic in character: in his later works Bachelard says that Beauty is to be found exclusively in, and can in a sense be identified with, the world of the imagination.

The critical method inspired by Bachelard's theory is in principle a simple one. It is to examine the nature and pattern of the images in a given work in order to discover the fundamental imaginative attitude to the world which has generated it. The images are at once architectural elements and genetic clues. This method has been employed with outstanding success by a number of French critics, though few of them accept that the most important 'archetypes' are fire, air, earth and water. The method has been criticized by other critics, as it is also in Sertoli's excellent study, on the ground that it ignores the compositional techniques employed in literary creation.

Bachelard himself never constructed a systematic aesthetic theory, though it is clear that his studies of the imagination provide, or ought to provide, the basis for one. In fact there are some serious difficulties facing any attempt to construct an aesthetic on Bachelardian principles. In the first place, his insistence that the imagination is inherently verbal is an obstacle to the construction of a theory of the non-literary arts. It is interesting to learn from Sertoli that Bachelard ignored music, and that he considered visual images to be a kind of visual analogue of verbal expressions. In the second place, his concept of the imagination is such that imaginative experience is pictured as a private and subjective state of consciousness. It is difficult to see how this can be incorporated in a theory which does justice both to the manual or technical factors in artistic creation and to the social, communal character of the world of art. This difficulty, moreover, is just as formidable for an aesthetics of literature alone.

Bachelard has been criticized for ignoring the role of the intellect in literary creation and appreciation, and this is strikingly apparent in his later works. As Sertoli points out, Bachelard totally reversed his position on the subject of metaphor. In his study of Lautréamont he held that metaphor was the characteristic product of the imagination; but in his later *La Poétique de l'Espace* he accused metaphor of being an intellectualistic distortion of the pure image. Ironically, he turned against literary criticism also. He came to believe that products of the imagination could not become the objects of scientific cognition, only of imaginative apprehension. This did not necessarily imply that aesthetics was impossible, but it did lead him to the conviction that the only genuine criticism was one in which the critic expressed his own imaginative experiences of literary works, and nothing else. It would seem that the fundamental difficulty in Bachelard's theory is the extremely rigid and unbridgeable divide between the scientific and the imaginative modes of consciousness.

But when all is said and done, Bachelard still remains an extraordinary though idiosyncratic genius, to whom the normal criteria of consistency and methodical accuracy are perhaps not wholly applicable. This study by Sertoli is sometimes prone to seek the intelligible paraphrase at the expense of Bachelard's subtlety, but this is more than compensated for by its admirable lucidity, complemented by an extensive bibliography.

HUGH BREDIN
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The Pre-Raphaelite Landscape. By ALLEN STALEY. Clarendon Press. 1973. pp. xxvi+193. Plates pp. 108. £12.50.

PROFFESOR STALEY'S subject, the Pre-Raphaelite treatment of landscape, inevitably excludes Rossetti for, as Ford Madox Brown remarked when Rossetti was laboriously painting the calf in *Found*, 'from want of habit, I see Nature bothers him'. To discuss Pre-Raphaelitism without Rossetti, whose enthusiasm, charm and gaiety did so much to inspire the original Brotherhood, is very like discussing *Hamlet* without the Prince, but Professor Staley's concentration on landscape allows him to examine the 'truth to Nature' aesthetic, Ruskin's influence on Pre-Raphaelitism, his reactions to it, and the revolution in English painting which the Pre-Raphaelites, especially Millais and Hunt, effected. The great merit of his book is that it makes the reader look at the pictures to see how these painters established their own conventions; and some of the plates are reproductions of pictures, normally immured in private collections, by painters like John William Inchbold and William Davis, whose work it is illuminating to compare with that of the more famous artists. Pre-Raphaelite paintings have always suffered from crude colour reproductions. Here most of the plates are monochrome, including Millais's *Waiting*, in the original a most subtle symphony in green, and his *Blind Girl*, in which the vibrant colours recreate the joys of sight. The colour plates are welcome reminders of the originals, but the colours are inclined to be harsh rather than fresh and glowing.

The history of Pre-Raphaelitism is, as Professor Staley shows, the history of the hopeless struggle to make truth to detail add up to essential or imaginative truth. He quotes Ruskin in 1883 reconsidering Hunt's *Strayed Sheep* (1852), discussing it as the first example of new 'attentive' landscape painting in England: 'It showed to us, for the first time in the history of art, the absolutely faithful balance of colour and shade by which actual sunshine might be transposed into a key in which the harmonies possible with material pigments should yet produce the same impressions upon the mind which were caused by the light itself' (p. 65). It sounds very learned, but evades the crucial question 'absolutely faithful' to *what*? As Edward Lear, who greatly admired Hunt and was for a time his pupil, wrote characteristically to his instructor: 'It is . . . impossible to do the view on a strictly P.R.B. principle—for supposing a tree is black one minute—the next it's yellow, & the 3rd green: so that were I to finish any one part the whole would be all spots—a sort of Leopard Landscape' (quoted p. 153).

Millais's landscapes, as Professor Staley shows, reveal a change in the 1850s. The careful painting of separate natural details has disappeared in *Autumn Leaves*, which Millais intended to be 'full of beauty and without subject'. This vagueness heralds his later mediocre paintings, full of sentiment to appeal to 'the public'. (p. 57). But it is also important to look back to the Romantics to see how Millais has transformed Romantic intensity of feeling. If his treatment of Autumn is compared with Keats's Ode on the same subject, it is apparent how the vigorous Romantic feeling of the poem has gone soft in sentimentality in the picture. Keats recreates the sensusous presence of the season but rejects the easy indulgence of nostalgia. His is a comprehensive vision which both reveals a point in time yet suggests its implications in the continuity of human life. Millais's range of perception is much narrower, he treats his images in such a way that they are unable to bear his load of sentiment and the tableau is static so that he can make it heavy with nostalgia. It is a perfect illustration of Romantic feeling degenerating into Victorian sentimentality. Ruskin transformed the Sublimity of

Romantic feeling into the Sublimity of God's creative energy, but his own confusion of thought on aesthetics is apparent when, having scrutinized natural details in his own drawings and declared his preference for 'particular' rather than 'general' truths, he rebuked the Pre-Raphaelites for not painting 'sublime' subjects. What he was really searching for was a reason for their lack of Romantic imaginative power. Blake can make the lamb an image of joy and love; but in Madox Brown's painting sheep become 'Pretty Baa-Lambs'. The image is domesticated and trivialized. As Professor Staley remarks, the great difference between the Romantic painters, like Constable and Turner, and the Pre-Raphaelites is that the former paint Nature as having a life of its own outside themselves, while the Pre-Raphaelites paint their own reactions to the scene. Heightened consciousness of an object, shared with the spectator, has become self-consciousness. Turner confronts the spectator with sea or sun or wind; in Pre-Raphaelite painting the first, dominant impression is generally speaking one of earnestness if not of obsession, hysteria, hallucination. As Professor Staley says of Hunt's *Scapegoat*: 'The colours are seen with an intensity and expressive power which go beyond naturalistic observation' (p. 69). The adolescent Henry James found the picture 'so charged with the awful that I was glad I saw it in company. . . . I believed . . . I should have feared to face it all alone in a room' (*Autobiography*, 1956, p. 178). Even so young, he possessed an impeccable critical judgement! The painting intensifies natural objects to the point of hallucination; it looks on to the work of an artist like Dali who uses objects to release and play with disturbing emotions rather than to establish and explore the objects themselves. Paradoxically, the heir to Pre-Raphaelitism is Surrealism. Professor Staley makes oblique reference to this but does not fully discuss it. It is important because it explains why the Pre-Raphaelites seldom achieved what he calls the 'poetry of fact' which Wordsworth and sometimes Ruskin do (p. 115). To achieve such poetry the life or presence of the object must be respected, not simply used. This is why Wallis's *Stonebreaker*, superior though it is to Brett's confection of the same title, dwindles to a rhetorical gesture when compared with Van Gogh's paintings of working people, such as *Peasant Woman, Brabant Headdress* (1885) and *Interior With Weaver* (1884). Van Gogh's approach to the peasant girl and the weaver is direct and humble, with the humility of a man patiently seeking the truth. From his alert reaction to their faces and clothes, to the man's dim cottage and his skill at the complicated loom, he creates poetry because he depicts them so that they suggest human dignity and ability and the interest of an individual way of life. Wallis, on the other hand, loads on to his dead pauper the pathos of the man's lot, and guilt that it is possible in a wealthy society. The spectator's reactions are so entrammelled that no imaginative release from the image is possible.

Was Ruskin the first theorist on aesthetics to consider guilt a necessary part of the creative process? When in 1858 Inchbold failed to follow his prescribed techniques for painting Alpine scenery he described the lapse in moral terms—'. . . he got entirely off the rails at Chamouni . . .'—but finally congratulated himself: 'At last I think I succeeded in making him entirely uncomfortable and ashamed of himself . . .' (quoted p. 118). His bullying of Millais and Inchbold and Brett was moral bullying, as Professor Staley shows, and when his painstaking assistant John Wharlton Bunney died, Ruskin's praise of his efforts 'for the . . . nobler probity of pictorial—more especially of landscape—art' was aptly expressed.

Such proselytizing created a climate of artistic endeavour which made inevitable the 'art for art's sake' reaction and Roger Fry's rebellion against the significantly structured painting which Ruskin's teaching favoured. Indeed, it is obvious from Professor Staley's detailed, well-documented discussion of these painters, and the reproductions which he offers of their work, that the strict Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic excludes both humour and tenderness. Hunt's *Festa at Fiesole* has something of both these qualities, which makes the water-colour outstanding in his work as a whole, and certainly amongst his paintings reproduced here.

SHEILA M. SMITH

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Bramante's Tempietto. By PETER MURRAY. The 53rd Charlton Lecture. University of Newcastle upon Tyne. 1972. pp. 21. £1.

IN PROFESSOR MURRAY'S Charlton lecture of November, 1970, Bramante's Tempietto, in the courtyard of San Pietro in Montorio in Rome, is discussed both as a High-Renaissance *exemplum* and as a Petrine symbol. Admittedly, his approach here is primarily iconographical.

Iconography of architecture is, of course, a misnomer unless it equally concerns the building as a symbol of meaning and that of form. Professor Murray suggests that the Tempietto was built as a martyrium, commemorating the place where according to a tradition St Peter was crucified. In evidence he cites the inscription in the crypt recording the foundation and dedication in 1502, by Ferdinand and Isabella to 'the martyrdom of St. Peter', and the emblematic motifs of the metopes decorating the circular entablature. Thus, as a symbol of meaning, the Tempietto signifies the strength of Christian faith. But in his analysis Professor Murray goes beyond the conception of the building as a symbol of literal meaning. With the full armory of modern art-historical research he convincingly describes Bramante's masterpiece both as an ambitious and idealistic plan never fully realized and as the completed original building before any of the alterations had taken place. The latter is here correlated with ancient and Renaissance prototypes. He compares the metopes, showing symbols of Petrine primacy intermingled with liturgical objects used in the celebration of the Mass, with a frieze fragment from the Temple of Vespasian representing objects of pagan sacrifice, which was above ground in the sixteenth century. Moreover he relates the overall form of the building to the classical type of centrally planned two storey martyria where a similar domical structure is supported by a circular colonnade. He claims that since Early-Christian times this type of building was occasionally associated with the Holy Sepulchre, and became the prototype of Christian martyria. Serlio's view of 1537, containing reference to Bramante's Roman buildings, is also quoted here, that in the Vitruvian terms of *decorum* the Doric order—in which the Tempietto was built—was considered appropriate to commemorate martyrdom. Finally he compares the conspicuously simple style of the original Tempietto to that of a centrally planned commemorative temple in one of the illustrations of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* of 1499, renowned for its characteristically Renaissance fusion of the Classical and the Christian.

In Professor Murray's view the Tempietto is the consummation of Bramante's Milanese period and it anticipates his plans for New S. Peter's. While in the service of the Sforza in Milan Bramante worked alongside Leonardo, who probably under the influence of the early printed editions of Vitruvius was at this time engaged on his architectural treatise almost

exclusively dealing with centrally planned buildings. It is also suggested that Bramante's first architectural work in Milan, the centrally planned Sta Maria presso San Satiro, shows the combined influence of Leonardo's theoretical drawings with the late-Roman style of the Milanese Early-Christian basilica of S. Lorenzo before its sixteenth-century remodelling. Thus Bramante's Roman studies of Constantinian martyria (as Sta Costanza) and ancient centrally planned buildings (as the Pantheon, which since 608 was rededicated significantly to Sta Maria ad Martyres) were predetermined. And when Professor Murray finally interprets the Tempietto in conjunction with Bramante's Pantheon-like plans for New S. Peter's, he can rightly claim that 'Bramante was not merely reviving the external forms of ancient architecture but was infusing them with a specifically Christian meaning. . . .'

This lecture is stimulating even in the printed form. Yet at the same time it leaves us aware of the need for a fuller monographic exposition. Some of the major topographical and commemorative architectural features, as well as the religious, political, social and private aspects of the commission are hardly mentioned here. Many of these were partially explored by Fehl, Günther, Huskinson, Lotz, Rosenthal, Vannicelli and Waetzoldt, but their publications are not easily accessible to the English-reading non-specialist reader. No one is better suited than Professor Murray to carry out a thorough re-examination of current research and to present us with an authoritative monograph on this important monument of the High Renaissance.

GEORGE T. NOSZLOPY
Birmingham Polytechnic

The Treasures of the Foundling Hospital. By BENEDICT NICOLSON. Clarendon Press. 1972. pp. viii+98, 99 plates. £3.

THIS IS an exemplary and authoritative work which can in no way be faulted. Not only has Benedict Nicolson produced a scrupulously documented catalogue raisonné (based on an earlier draft catalogue by John Kerslake) of 108 pictures, drawings and sculptures, together with the outstanding furniture and silver of the Foundling Hospital which was established by Royal Charter in 1739, but he has also preceded it by a group of packed chapters which draw upon numerous unpublished original sources and present the history of the Hospital in its civic, humanitarian and fine-arts contexts. There are no fragmented passages in these chapters. For example, an account of the Hospital's founder, Thomas Coram, dovetails with an analysis of the Nabot and Hogarth portraits of him in their relationships to the practice and theory of eighteenth-century British portraiture; a presentation of the background of the Hospital's architect, Theodore Jacobsen, leads naturally to an evaluation of the relation of the original solid and imposing building (razed alas, in the 1920s) to mid-Georgian architecture; a discussion of artists who utilized the Hospital as an exhibiting centre exfoliates into a pithy recapitulation of British artistic developments in the 1750s, especially in relation to the beginnings of academies and societies of art and the growth of the obsession with historical painting in which considerations of artistic patronage and enlightened self-interest played no small role; an analysis of the evolution of the architecture and the appointments of the Chapel connects logically with a rich section on music and Handel, whose energetic activity on behalf of the Charity caused it to grow from strength to strength.

Happily Mr. Nicolson's presentation is not detached: his aesthetic judgements are valid and evocative when he writes of the works of art by Dance, Gainsborough, Hayman, Highmore, Hogarth,

Hudson, Lambert, Ramsay, Reynolds, Rysbrack, and Wilson, among others, which can now be seen and studied in Brunswick Square at the Thomas Coram Foundation for Children. There the involved visitor can judge for himself whether, as Mr. Nicolson maintains, the sumptuous Court Room, whose ceiling, mantelpiece, doors and architraves are intact, having been carefully dismantled and faithfully erected in Brunswick Square, evokes 'the atmosphere of the mid-eighteenth century [which] can nowhere be better captured in the whole of London'.

MARCIA ALLENTUCK
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A Biographical Dictionary of Wax Modellers. By E. J. PYKE. Oxford University Press. 1973. £20.

INHERITING a collection of portrait waxes from his father twenty years ago, E. J. Pyke discovered a dearth of information on the subject of the artists involved and he set out to remedy the matter by compiling his own dictionary. This present splendid reference book is the result. Obviously the book is a specialist one; and since the wax modeller has been represented down the centuries in so many branches of the arts, science and industry, the research and scholarship must have been formidable. Invaluable lists of private and public collections are included, a stout bibliography on the subject and over 300 photographs illustrating examples of the work of separate artists. Mr. Pyke has written a short introduction which is scientific rather than historical, dealing with wax analysis and technique.

The history is allowed to speak for itself in fascinating contemporary accounts added to the alphabetical entries where possible and cross references are added to extend the study of a particular artist. The task of making this list comprehensive has been complicated by the fact that in many cases a modeller's name is recorded in history but no known example of his work still survives, or conversely that a fine work exists with no clue to the craftsman who produced it. The record is brought up to modern times with entries for such artists as Robert Cook and Medardo Rosso and the miraculous late work of Degas.

To most readers the important information must obviously be that concerned with ceramics, medal and coin-making in the past and the wealth of wax portraiture which has often left so valuable an impression of a famous personality. The author would be the first to agree that inevitably there are gaps and more information will come to light to augment his list. It is a little surprising that nowhere is mention made of those famous nineteenth-century doll-making families Montanari, Pierotti and Edwards, examples of whose work is proudly exhibited in museums all over the world. Wax doll making (and fashion model making) constituted an important industry in London during the middle years of the century and even the famous Madame Tussaud is credited with a portrait baby-doll now in a private collection.

M. HILLIER

African Animals in Renaissance Literature and Art. By JOAN BARCLAY LLOYD. Clarendon Press. pp. xi+145. £4·50.

WHY DID Piero della Francesca depict an ostrich egg prominently suspended over the Virgin and Child in his celebrated picture of her among the saints and with the kneeling Duke of Urbino at Brera, Milan? Why does the splendid, idealistic thirteenth-century figure of Le Beau Dieu at Amiens show Christ trampling on a lion and dragon?

These are a few among the very many questions thrown up in the history of art

that are now illuminated by Miss Lloyd's addition to the Oxford Studies in the History of Art and Architecture. Her book, the outcome of assiduous study in the Warburg Institute, British Museum and elsewhere for a university higher degree, is a competent survey of a neglected aspect of medieval and Renaissance art. Briefly pointing out the extent to which wild beasts from Africa have figured in theology, mythology and, to some extent, zoology, she also indicates some Classical antecedents. Ninety-three illustrations powerfully support the theme although five of the reproductions of Iacopo Bellini's lions are so faint that they stimulate the hope that the experts at the British Museum may, unless the originals are too faded, be able to increase their definition before the volume is reprinted, as it deserves to be.

F. R. COWELL

On Art and Mind. Essays and Lectures. By RICHARD WOLLHEIM. Allen Lane. 1973. pp. xii+340. £6.00.

THIS BEAUTIFULLY produced volume brings together fifteen papers written since 1963; all but three have appeared before, and are reprinted for the most part with only minor revisions, although the valuable 'Reflections on *Art and Illusion*' contains four new pages. Most of the essays explore ways in which the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of art interact, but perhaps the most prominent aspect of the book is the dominance of psychoanalytic theory. Wollheim observes in the Preface that he underwent analysis for a period of eight years during which most of the papers were written, and the experience seems to have influenced the style of his presentation—a matter to which I shall return.

'Imagination and Identification' is the only 'purely' philosophical paper not previously published, and begins by exploring the claim that there are three types of imagining. I might imagine doing something, imagine myself doing something, or imagine someone else doing something. In order to discuss the relation between imagining someone feeling something and feeling that thing, Wollheim first considers the task of an actor, and then those of an empathic audience: a member of the audience 'feels what he does not because of what he watches but because of what he imagines: but he imagines what he does because of what he watches' (67). But Wollheim insists that 'in any adequate account of the imagination, place should be found for an internal version of the dramatist as well as of the actor and of the audience'. To explain the way in which I initiate what I imagine Wollheim invokes the Freudian notion of identification, stressing, however, that identification should be explained in terms of imagination, rather than vice-versa. He suggests that the notion of the 'master thought' helps to illuminate one feature of identification which is otherwise puzzling, the effectiveness of our imaginings—where the master thought is understood as the way an individual conceives of the mental process of imagining (75–76). Wollheim also believes that the notion of the master thought enables us to see which constituents of imagination should be thought of as active and which as passive. For if imaginings are conceived of as a way of gaining mastery over another person, then the project is active, and if as a way of merging oneself with another person, as passive. In order to grasp the full sense of imagining myself being Brown, I must supplement my imagining myself having various Brownian properties with an appropriate master thought; for it is not enough, generally, only to imagine myself doing things I believe Brown does. Wollheim does not fully elucidate the nature of such a master thought.

The other new papers are on Walter

Pater and Giovanni Morelli, respectively. In the former Wollheim seeks to displace a standard interpretation of Pater as an aesthete. He shows how Pater's theoretical remarks have been mistakenly interpreted; Pater was aware of the perpetual fascination of metaphysical systems, but he believed such systems to be futile and he never abandoned his Humean scepticism. For Pater, Metaphysics faced backwards towards its origins in feeling and thought or language and forward towards its consequences in practice. Pater thought of works of art as expressive through their surface qualities, and here a general influence was Hegel. But Pater used the distinction between Form and Content to show how the immediate qualities of a work of art gain life for the spectator through what lies behind them.

In the paper on Morelli Wollheim carefully outlines Morellian method and then asks whether it is coherent, complete, justified. Although the answer is 'No' in each case, Wollheim stresses that Morelli perceived that the essence of a work of art lies in specific and characteristic elements inserted by the artist in it, elements that cannot be defined uniquely in terms of either form or content. Like others, Morelli emphasised the analogy between a work of art and language; but like others of his time he had little conception of language, and omitted consideration of syntax and semantics.

The remaining essays for the most part will be familiar to readers of this *Journal*. They range from Wollheim's Inaugural lecture, and his Royal Institute of Philosophy lecture on 'expression', to his Ernest Jones lecture, 'The Mind and the Mind's Image of Itself', his discussion of 'Freud and the Understanding of Art' (published in this *Journal*, 1970), his recent paper on Collingwood, and an expanded version of his discussion of Goodman's *Languages of Art*. In 'The Work of Art as Object' Wollheim expands on his brief remarks in *Art and its Objects* that, in a non-trivial sense, to be a work of art is to be produced under a concept of art, and in 'The Art Lesson' he traces an analogy between Wittgenstein's account of a language lesson and what goes on in an art lesson. Just as for a language lesson to be effective a pupil must have some prior general knowledge of language into which he can fit what he is presented with, so also must an art pupil have some general knowledge of art in order to see what is required of him in the formation of a style.

Style is not only a recurrent artistic and philosophical problem in Wollheim's discussions, it is also the most dominant feature of his presentation. No reader could miss the repetition of Freudian terms—'unconscious', 'manifest', 'evident', 'associate', 'suggest', and all the more obvious technical notions—nor could he miss the references to 'complexity', 'profound discussions', 'deeper interpretations'. There seem to be two distinguishable styles that Wollheim adopts, however. When engaged in exegesis, or when addressing non-philosophers, he is capable of clearly expressed, lucidly phrased discussion; apart from its other virtues which make it a classic in its field, the essay on Pater, and to a lesser extent the one on Morelli, illustrate my point. Similarly the discussion of 'Eliot and F. H. Bradley' is relatively free from the idiosyncrasies which characterise the second style. When he is addressing philosophers or psychoanalysts the rhetorical mode Wollheim favours is one of elliptical unfolding; qualifications abound, interpolations proliferate, and to avoid saying anything simply Wollheim resorts to grammatical encrustation, to aphorism, or to assertions that the matter is too complex to pursue. It is almost impossible to believe that some of the papers in this volume were delivered as lectures; there are so few aids to comprehension, and in almost no instance is an audience treated to an advance

outline, let alone a concluding summary (on page 204 Wollheim apologises for what might be mistaken for an advance outline). When praising the work of his friend Adrian Stokes, Wollheim comments on his style: 'It is not easy for the reader to determine what is the central idea, and which are the reservations or the qualifying thoughts. But then this too can be a form of precision: the finding of a precise equivalent to the fluctuations of feeling and perception, which are inherent in art'. And again, when discussing Pater's style, he remarks on the 'hesitancies, its self-conscious use of imagery, its striving to capture and display the emotional force that lies behind the cool argumentation—but to display it lucidly, for our understanding'. Applied to himself, Wollheim would no doubt welcome these remarks as compliments. But it seems to me that the dangers of self-deception loom large at this point, and Wollheim is by no means the first Anglo-Saxon philosopher whose powers of effective communication have been sadly impaired by the experience of psychoanalysis. Unlike other philosophers who do not have that excuse, Wollheim has shown himself elsewhere, and sometimes also in these essays, to be capable of masterly handling of his material. None of these remarks should be taken to imply that only one mode of philosophical presentation is acceptable, nor that the complex should be treated as simple or the essentially vague as precise. But in recent years there has been a regrettable refusal to comment on opaque or self-indulgently obscure presentations, and the retort that only a reader's incompetence prevents comprehension in such cases is too cheap to reckon with. The ideas in this book are important enough to merit serious reflection, and a reader deserves the compliment of a clear discussion.

PETER JONES

University of Edinburgh

Language and Aesthetics. Contributions to the philosophy of art. Edited by BENJAMIN R. TILGHMAN. Kansas. 1973. pp. 165. $8.00

THE EDITOR of this useful anthology of new, short articles claims that in order to do aesthetics one must first do philosophy of mind, but that to get clear about the nature of mind one has to get clear about the nature of language. This Wittgensteinian view dominates the book and is echoed in the title, which intentionally reverses the title of Elton's well known collection. The articles are for the most part clearly focused and illustrate trends in recent analytic philosophy of art without attempting to cover the whole range of issues currently being studied. It is perhaps a pity that neither editor nor authors acknowledged that nearly all the arguments here presented have been paralleled elsewhere—as *cognoscenti* will recognise—and that no overall index or bibliography has been provided. Puzzling notions from Wittgenstein's works are used by several of the authors without clarification, most notably 'grammar', 'form of life' and 'criterion'. But several of the ideas canvassed in this volume are worthy of further study and for this reason alone the book should be recommended; many of the discussions are mutually illuminating, not least when they reveal contrary assumptions or varying interpretations of Wittgensteinian method.

Weitz argues that Wittgenstein offers no wholesale view of the logic of concepts, but that his basic contribution to aesthetics is the doctrine of open concepts. A concept is open when it functions under a disjunctive set of criteria which corresponds to certain family resemblances, although the criteria are neither necessary nor sufficient. Wittgenstein does not hold that there is only one kind of open concept, for he acknowledges some with necessary but not definitive criteria.

Weitz believes that there are three important kinds of concepts in aesthetics: the perennially flexible, the perennially debatable, the irreducibly vague. For concepts such as tragedy a more radical theory of openness is needed than family resemblance and flexibility. Weitz believes that Wittgenstein's 'logical behaviourism' about the role and necessary outward criteria of mental concepts does not, but ought to, allow for perennially debatable concepts.

By way of reply to Weitz's paper on Wittgenstein's aesthetics, Dickie outlines again his own 'Institutional conception of art'. Dickie argues that some closed concepts are capable of being changed, and that a clue to how this is done may be derived from taking Wittgenstein's notion of a 'form of life' seriously. The prominence of accidental features has prevented us from noticing that art does have essential criteria. The key notion is that of the social institution, the 'Art-world'. Dickie holds that: 'A work of art in the classificatory sense is (1) an artifact (2) upon which some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain social institution (the Artworld) have conferred the status of candidate for appreciation'. The defining properties are thus non-exhibited relational properties, for something is art because of the place it has in a certain social system.

Unfortunately neither Weitz nor Dickie explains how they use the term 'criterion' nor whether they believe themselves to be following Wittgenstein's variant usage. Dickie's account as it stands is open to several obvious although not insuperable objections. His account is from the viewpoint of the viewer, not the creator, and it might be contended that there are important differences between one who carves a piece of wood and one who finds a piece of driftwood and places it for the attention of others; it is unlikely that *a priori* we would refuse to classify as art the production of an artifact on which no one else, contingently, had conferred the status of 'candidate for appreciation'. There are the dangers of the notion of conferring this status becoming trivial and, furthermore, of avoiding triviality only by re-introducing evaluative considerations. Parenthetically, it is not clear precisely what Wittgenstein himself meant by 'form of life', and Dickie's suggestions, parallel as they are to several historical precedents, should perhaps be seen as inspired by, rather than based on, Wittgenstein's ideas.

Francis Coleman offers 'A few observations on Fictional Discourse', and Marcia Eaton, addressing herself to the same issues, re-introduces her notion of *translocuting*. Writers often attribute speech acts to dramatic speakers, that is to persons making the statements in the various grammatical moods that we find in texts; the activity of attributing linguistic actions to dramatic speakers is 'translocuting'. Misinterpretation of a work is likely to attend misidentification of the dramatic speaker, and although once given life dramatic speakers stand and speak by themselves, we are ordinarily interested in knowing what the dramatic speaker is saying. It is not clear whether Marcia Eaton is committed to a notion of *the* (proper) interpretation of a literary work and if so, how she caters for changes and fashions in interpretation. Further, she claims that by introducing the notion of 'trans-expression' we can 'remove responsibility for emotions from the author'; it is unclear whether this device clarifies or explains anything.

Guy Sircello seeks to show that Kennick's 'Does traditional aesthetics rest on a mistake?' itself misconceives Wittgenstein's principle of 'look and see'. Kennick's presupposition that there can be a class of *linguistically* determined central cases of art leads him to see conflicting theories of art as conflicting over a

common class of objects, whereas they are in fact conflicting ways of determining what belongs to the class of art objects. Indeed, conflicting accounts of art such as we find in Tolstoy or Malraux and Clive Bell should be conceived of not as sets of assertions but as expressions of attitudes; and in this context philosophy might have the role of determining which attitude it is best to have.

William Lycan and Peter Machamer present 'A theory of critical reasons' influenced by some of John Wisdom's regrettably unpublished works. This is a valuable paper, which begins by criticising well known articles of Isenberg and Ziff. The writers argue that Isenberg mixes up the grammar of the critic's function with the psychology of the critical responses he induces, and that he gives no account of how critical concepts are related to the percepts a critic tries to induce. Unlike other writers in this anthology they explain how they use the notions of symptom and criterion. A symptom is what we have found experimentally to be evidence for something; a criterion is what, in ostensive definition, we have learned to call evidence for that thing. Criteria can give us certain knowledge entitling us to override judgements made by someone who, pre-analytically, has 'privileged access' to the truth. The authors distinguish between detachable and non-detachable reasons, and use Wisdom's notion of a continuum of reasons. Briefly, 'a fact can serve as a critical reason why some painting P is good if and only if it is about P and non-detachable'. The point is that particular reasons in a given piece of criticism can be arranged in some sort of continuum, and the reasons vary in the extent to which their significance depends on a context larger than that provided by the painting itself. A detachable reason requires no artistic knowledge on the part of anyone who understands its meaning. Detachable reasons have pride of place in teaching, and justifying indeed can be seen as teaching in reverse (as several followers of Wittgenstein have noted). Reasons are public and universal in that they can be conceptually connected to verdicts by continua of a quasi-criterial nature; but it would be a mistake to call this connection evidential, because a reason is recognised as such only when we possess the appropriate mental set.

Thomas Mayberry writes on 'Aesthetic pleasure and enjoyment' and shows that Santayana presupposed a theory of mind that rendered his views on aesthetic pleasure and enjoyment untenable. Mayberry recognises that Santayana's theory echoes that of several illustrious predecessors, but many readers would have welcomed some precise references (*e.g.* to passages in Hume), because the criticisms apply just as forceably. Mayberry claims that Santayana saw the mind as a psychological mechanism whose parts serve various functions; the senses are affected by external objects, and imagination unifies the resulting sensations into percepts. The lure of this uncheckable hypothesis depends on its ability to explain mistaken third-person ascriptions of mental states; but it does not account for correct ascriptions and it makes learning and teaching of mental concepts impossible. Santayana's account of pleasure is incoherent because it requires that we enjoy the mental object that results from the action of the object we claim to enjoy. 'Pleasure' is not the name of a process, and neither is 'beauty' the name of an identifiable mental state discoverable by introspection. Claims of the form 'He is enjoying himself' are not inferences from observable behaviour to the inaccessible region of the mind and do not legitimize (in Wisdom's phrase) the perpetual possibility of doubt. For if no valid reason exists for raising a doubt, then none exists for calling for a justification of a

claim that someone is in a certain mental state.

Unfortunately, after these familiar Wittgensteinian observations Mayberry's very brief positive characterisation of aesthetic pleasure is unilluminating: it 'is just that pleasure which is a response to the aesthetic qualities of art objects and what is like these, and it is expressed by the appropriate sort of behaviour in the presence of these objects'.

Tilghman argues that questions about the mode of existence of literary works are illegitimate. There is no conceptual room for confusing poems with intentions or reactions, and the main reason why central questions about interpretation have got muddled with questions about identification is that many philosophers have thought of literary criticism on analogy with natural history. As others have argued, including myself, Tilghman asserts that the identifying property of a poem is usually a text, and that understanding requires a context; where it is supplied by a reader alternative interpretations are always possible.

PETER JONES

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THE BRITISH SOCIETY OF AESTHETICS

THE EIGHTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE of the Society was held during the weekend 21–23 September, 1973, at Connaught Hall, Tavistock Square. People were pleased with the range and the quality of the papers and the discussions which followed were lively and effective, often relating points to themes of earlier papers, so that a developing debate showed signs of emerging.

The conference opened with a paper by Hugo Meynell (Leeds University) on "Aesthetic Satisfaction", chaired by Eva Schaper. The Saturday morning session, chaired by Peter Jones, consisted of papers on "Creativity" by Professor Jack Glickman, (State University of New York, Brockport) and criticisms of "An Institutional Theory of Art" by Professor William Blizek (University of Nebraska). In the afternoon Richard Bird, an experimental psychologist at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, gave a paper based on his research, entitled "An Experimental Approach to Musical Perception". Professor Kyla Grünbaum of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama followed with "The Generative Potential of Applied Aesthetics". This was a fascinating account, illustrated with tapes, of work she has been doing in a new combined music/drama movement course at the Guildhall School. Professor Louis Arnaud Reid took the chair. Speakers kept their papers brief as they were asked to do. L. Santoro of University College, Dublin, began the Sunday morning session with a paper entitled "Doktor Faustus' Mentor. Th. W. Adorno and the Death of Art". William Watts Miller of the Sociology Department, Bristol University, followed with a paper on " 'Germinal' and 'The Division of Labour' ". Miss R. Meager chaired the meeting.

The final session, chaired by Professor Saw, heard papers from Alwynne Mackie (La Trobe University) on "The Structure of Aesthetically Interesting Metaphors" and Ralph Berry (University of Manitoba) on "The Symbolism of D. G. Rossetti".

The success of the Conference owed not a little to the fact that speakers kept their papers within the prescribed limits and thus allowed time for question and debate.

T. J. DIFFEY

THE NINTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE of the Society will be held from 20th to 22nd September, 1974, at Connaught Hall, 36–45 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9EX.

Details from Dr. T. J. Diffey, School of English and American Studies, Arts Building, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, Sussex, BN1 9QN.

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ART AND BEAUTY

RAMONA CORMIER
DIFFERENCE AND UNIQUENESS IN AESTHETIC THEORY

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THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF AESTHETICS

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ART AND BEAUTY*

R. Meager

THE PURSUIT of the fine arts, as productive activities distinct from vocational engagement in techniques and crafts of various kinds, is a rather local phenomenon in human history. Moreover from classical times it has been recognized that to the extent that such very fine art separates itself off from the various crafts it involves, and distinguishes itself as answerable to no clear demand for specifiable end-products or for accuracy to specification in those end-products which it allows patrons to specify for it, it is an activity for which no adequate principles of production can be drawn up, learned and taught. Consequently its intelligibility as a human activity is threatened, even if the threat is thought of under the ambivalent form of Plato's 'divine madness'. Crafts, after all, have the clearest possible title to intelligibility for our teleologically functioning minds. Human activity itself is essentially goal-directed and a craft precisely is a goal-directed activity *intelligently* ordered and carried out with regard to materials, means and ends. And while it was possible to regard artists as supercraftsmen, carrying out perhaps very difficult orders for the most exalted patrons with practised and attested if supreme skill, no question could arise as to what it was they were about, what their efforts were directed at, what constituted success or failure, glory or defect, at least in an obvious because utilitarian sense. No doubt such artists also worked with greater or less individual felicity in the exercise of their particular craft, earning themselves greater or less renown for the beauty or perfection of their work; but this gilt upon their gingerbread could be comfortably accommodated as an added perfection only to be expected in works dedicated to the service of such exalted causes or persons. But since artists have liberated themselves from subservience to craftsmanlike tasks and ends, however exalted, and have raised the banner of the autonomy of art, this obvious utilitarian-type intelligibility is lost to them and no replacement presents itself clearly as inherent in the nature of art itself. The '*ratio*' of 'Art' as an independently valuable activity seems

* This paper was first read at the Seventh International Congress of Aesthetics, Bucharest, and to The British Society of Aesthetics in November, 1973.

obstinately to resist analysis. The proclaimed autonomy of art has accordingly ushered in a reign of conceptual anarchy. Attempts to find a unifying end for art itself in such previously means-like tasks as representation or expression prove restrictive or vacuous and recently, in the empiricist camp at least, defeat has actually been welcomed, with characteristic philosophical masochism, in the adoption of Wittgenstein's 'family resemblance' model for a concept, with its explicit instruction *not* to look for any one unifying principle relating every instance to every other instance of the concept over its whole range, as just the thing for the concept of art.

However, the merely negative force of this proposal from Wittgenstein has been supplemented by the more positive claim from his followers that we should view art as what Wittgenstein called a 'form of life'. I suspect at least a two-level admonition here, corresponding to at least two of the levels at which Wittgenstein speaks of 'forms of life'. (A) The more obvious reference is that to be found in his treatment, in *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics*, of an artistic culture (such as could be elitist or popular, decadent or healthy) as a 'form of life'. So we find him reported as maintaining that 'what belongs to a language-game belongs to a whole culture', and that to say what 'appreciation' consists in we would need to know the whole social complex of activities and attentions within which such 'appreciation' emerges: 'whether children give concerts, whether women do or only men do, etc.' as the lecture-notes illustrate. We could add: whether and how children are formally and informally introduced to the arts generally; whether one dresses for the opera; whether churches, priests, liturgical procedures are elaborately adorned; whether there are national galleries for the exhibition of paintings, and if so whether they contain paintings by contemporary artists; whether, and if so relatively how much, one has to pay for entry to them (the Tories have much to answer for!), etc. The theory is that only a grasp of the whole social complex of activities concerned in the production, display, performance, discussion, defence of, attacks on, material support for, collection or storage of, what people in some roughly homogeneous social group treat as art—and not merely a grasp such that one could *describe* these but a grasp such that one can feel oneself into participating in them, engaging in them from the heart as a form of one's own life: only on the basis of such a grasp does the conception of 'art' related to such a socially based 'appreciation' acquire intelligibility and the title of 'work of art' a definite sense in which it operates not merely as a description applied with certain truth-conditions but also as a regulative idea in the thought of artists and public alike.

In this account of the role of art in our lives—parallel for example, to the account which people have found in Wittgenstein of religious belief as an expression of a whole 'form of life' rather than a claim to dogmatic truth—we have a prescription for a relativized concept of a culturally sophisticated form of art as a medium of communication within a culturally prepared group. Such a concept accommodates very easily the autonomy claimed for art, or rather for the artist, in post-Renaissance western European culture, providing him with just the social basis for intelligible work which he otherwise would lack. This is made clear in, for example, the penetrating study *Art and Its Objects* by Richard Wollheim, in which he celebrates this concept of art and the artist. A crude summary of the derived account of the art of painting, adapted from a radio talk by Professor Wollheim, may help to show how this concept of art works out in practice.

Painting, we may say, is necessarily at least the making of marks on a plane surface. This, simply as a voluntary activity, is (or can be) fun for the painter, and would have a point just as such. But painting is this *plus* the leaving of a trace which can be seen. So the painter can *deepen* his fun by so directing his activity as to leave a trace which he *intends to be seen*, and in which spectators (himself included) may *recognize his intentions* in leaving such a trace to be seen, so that the painter's deeper fun in intention–realization in a trace will be matched by the spectators' deeper fun in intention–recognition in the trace. Such an exchange of intentions realized and recognized in a trace constitutes *sense* of a sort in the trace. But presupposed to the possibility of such an exchange of understood intentions in a trace is the existence of, and on the part of both painter and spectator the internalized understanding of, ranges of already available forms for traces to take: available media, available techniques, available ways of forming images or patterning compositions, ways of alluding to aspects of natural or social life, to history, to geography, etc., etc. That is, presupposed to the deeper potentialities of intention–realization and intention–recognition conferring sense of this sort on paintings is a hierarchy of what Wollheim calls 'stringencies' accepted and used by the painter, each constituting at once a limiting and a signifying factor to be taken into account in determining where and how his marks shall fall; each representing a range of alternatives among which the marks he actually makes represent significantly expressive *choices*. The painter *must* use such recognized media, techniques, images, etc., to make his individual point in his individual mark; the spectator *must* understand the trace as representing *this* choice among well understood alternatives if he is to recognize the individual point the painter is making in this choice. But

both use and understanding must be (or must at least give the effect of) an exercise of an *internalized spontaneous* judgement in the making of, and in the interpretation of, marks: must represent an expression of a (highly sophisticated, no doubt) form of life. Otherwise the traces will be inscribed, and 'read off', in ways appropriate rather to the characters in a written document than to the directly experienced forms of a work of art.

Now it is indeed possible to use Wittgenstein's 'form of life' recipe at this sophisticated level in giving an account of the intelligibility of certain forms (typically elitist, of course) of art; but there is also the less obvious, and more interesting, deeper level of reference to 'forms of life' (B) in Wittgenstein's writings which he equates, for example, with that 'agreement in judgments' (*Philosophical Investigations*, Part I. 241–2) on which the possibility of agreed *or* disputed opinions in any area of communication of experience depends. Thus 'agreement in judgments' in spontaneous colour-discrimination is necessarily presupposed to the possibility of the determinable disputes we have in opinions as to the colour of particular coloured objects, and of the truth-condition governed colour-concepts which make such determinable disputes possible. The theory that art operates also, and perhaps primarily, as a 'form of life' at this basic level, a form of life shared almost universally, mediating and making intelligible the communication of experiences of all kinds—perceptions, sentiments, exaltations and disgusts—from the simplest to the most complex, would provide an explanation at least of the temptation to think of art as a universal language. It resembles, no doubt, Kant's conception of the 'universal voice' making intelligible the judgement of *beauty*. Now the Wittgenstein followers' emphasis is on *art* as communication in a more sophisticated framework and at a more local, culturally relativized level of response, and is seemingly far from Kant's concern with the communicability of the sense of beauty, whether in nature or in art. But if we could draw together the traditional twin concerns of art and beauty, it might be because we could treat art also as a form of human life (B), as relating to a near-universal human responsive framework within which we can understand the intelligibility, of a non-utilitarian kind, of art as a distinct human activity.

Now if we take the level (A) claim that art should be seen as articulating a whole particular culture, this in itself unexceptionable plea for all-round and deep understanding of the whole range of the actual social phenomena articulated by our particular concern with art effectively underwrites the currently accepted selective principles and limitations on that range; and if, like Wollheim, we derive our concept of art from reflection on an

art-scene in which art is taken as essentially autonomous, I suggest that at least two factors supervene which tend to drive art, so conceived, to suicide.

First, having thrown off in the name of the autonomy of art such external goals as producing beauty in the service of God or of Mammon, artists have necessarily themselves assumed responsibility for self-directed spontaneous concerns, whether in wrestling with the angel of their art or more generally in wrestling with life-exploration through their art. But this has placed an awful onus of spontaneity and originality on the individual artist. Certainly he can use the ordered systems of expression afforded him by his art, his time, his society; but it is his own thing he is expected to do with these trappings. He must become an Adrian Leverkühn or a Tonio Kröger, dedicating his life to self-directed artistic innovation, or self- or life-exploration. But in the former case there is a limit of tolerance in both artist and public for the interest to be found in the in-group excitements of paint-surface swearing at paint-surface, paint-edge cutting paint-edge; in the regress of films about films, plays about plays, novels about novels and so on through the permutations; and in the latter case artistic order comes to be seen as inhibiting genuine exploration and expression: the gap between art and life demands to be closed, and we are presented with exhibitions in which it is *logically* impossible to distinguish the exhibits from the gallery furnishings or accidental detritus without recourse to the catalogue and with concerts at which it is logically impossible to distinguish the new work from the surrounding silences except by John Cage's say-so. But it seems fair to call this situation a kind of death of art.

Secondly, taking to heart the thought that art can only be understood in the light of the whole social form of life which it articulates, let us consider the relationship between such autonomous artists, so necessarily original, and their critics and the public; for now the public must all perforce like sheep look up and wait for pre-feeding by responsive and articulate professional critics, who alone have the time and training necessary to feel their way into the ever newer art forms, before they can have any hope of appreciating what the artist is up to. To survive at all, therefore, our original artist must attract to himself critics who will take the trouble so to immerse themselves in his work that like sensitive midwives they can deliver this strange offspring in its new form whole and clear to the patient public, who may be as well disposed, as open and receptive as you please (though many, alas, are not) but will inevitably need guidance to adjust their ears and expectations to, say, the new 12-tone structures placed before them. Now such critics develop a vested

interest in those artists whose minds they come to understand; and behind them lie dealers or media men with vested interests in regular producers of works which can be rendered distinctively recognizable, even to a certain extent predictably describable, and so treated as a roughly predictable marketable product. Thus as the erstwhile external support of the artist by church or public dignitary for works of glorification is replaced by supposedly internal support for the sake of his art alone, there is a built-in temptation to both critics and dealers or promoters to attend to and value art works primarily according to *whose* works they are, reinforcing the orthodoxy anyway of the primacy of the artist as originator. This apotheosis of the artist once recognized as a great name is complete, of course, only in the international auction rooms and only in regard to Old Masters safely dead. But with autonomous art the same tendency operates all the way down the scale, putting some severe strain on the spontaneity and originality of New Masters, still but half way through their contract with their dealer-investor. Under such strain it is understandable that we find the narcissistic regressions of art upon art, and of art devoted to The Artist's Problem, already adverted to; and also, of course, the various repudiations of these in the anti-art gestures in which Duchamp's ready-made joins silent music, auto-destructive mechanical absurdities meet vasty 'earth-art' projects, and at the farthest remove from medium-delight the marvellous conceptual art arises in typescript upon labels.

It is indeed tempting to regard such phenomena as marking that death of art so ambivalently decreed by Plato, so cheerfully announced by Hegel, its heir-presumptive. But they might rather be a signal to make us reconsider our concept of art; to put in question at least *this* autonomous, auto-publicizing conception of the artist fostered in the associated conception of art as a necessarily sophisticated, culturally circumscribed, individual-to-individual form of communication of experience. Rather than throw ourselves to the anti-art wolves, we might at least recall the possibility that art may also operate as a form of life at the (B) level, in a sense in which it would have intelligibility born not merely of a local fashionable culture-phase but of a universal mode of communication relating to some universally shared human sensitivity—say, even, to beauty. True, the concept of beauty is itself still obscure to us; the power and the *modus operandi* of the beautiful is as mysterious, if not as terrible, to us as to Plato (unless indeed one allows Kant some credit here). But does it not have more to do with what we have chosen and valued as art through the ages of human production than individual sophistication, autonomy, originality, spontaneity, etc., in the artist? It is not, after all,

because Shakespeare is superior in these, or in political or practical wisdom, or in self-awareness, or in many-layered ambiguity, to, say, Dr. Johnson, that Shakespeare's poetry is memorable and the articulate and learned Doctor's is forgettable.

DIFFERENCE AND UNIQUENESS IN AESTHETIC THEORY[1]

Ramona Cormier

DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN philosophy and within the arts themselves have led philosophers to question the methodology and the direction that aesthetic theory has taken. John Passmore and Stuart Hampshire are among those who claim that aesthetic theories which focus on the establishment of comprehensive generalizations are dull, uninteresting and methodologically unsound.[2] Both deny that these generalizations can point out the properties contributing to a work of art's aesthetic goodness. If one sees the function of aesthetics as being the formulation of these generalizations, then they gainsay the existence of this field of philosophy. Yet both claim that aesthetic judgements about specific works of art can be made without reference to 'aesthetic properties' common to all good works of art. Passmore asserts that these judgements should rest upon 'much respect for real differences between the works of art themselves',[3] while Hampshire maintains that they should 'point to the arrangement of elements and show what constitutes the originality of the arrangement in [each] particular case'.[4]

These philosophers have, it seems to me, accurately assessed traditional aesthetic theories. However, I will contend in this paper that neither difference nor originality can be discerned without reference to properties common to at least some works of art. I will also maintain that these common characteristics are an essential aspect of a work and thus have some bearing on its aesthetic goodness. In the process of demonstrating the plausibility of these claims I will propose a definition of uniqueness which contradicts Mary Mothersill's claim that no interpretation of this concept can be both true and interesting.[5]

I

According to Passmore the dreariness of aesthetics is due to the blurring of distinctions among several different kinds of human activity. Blurring

occurs primarily because it is assumed that disciplines have a subject matter. In aesthetics such an assumption results in theories which are either marks-giving in nature or which say nothing in a very pretentious way.[6] Passmore maintains that theories of the first type articulate the rules to be applied in determining the distinctive properties of a work of art. These rules breed mechanical rather than spontaneous aesthetic responses and tend to overrate certain features of the work and to ignore others. In the second type of theory he claims that the generalizations proposed are vacuous and do not assist in the perception of the specific properties upon which aesthetic value might be based.[7] Passmore would remove this dreariness by abandoning the differentiation of disciplines by subject matter and would, instead, distinguish them by approach. Since approaches cannot be differentiated by appeal to specific kinds of properties Passmore elects to indicate diversity by the types of questions raised. The question he finds most appropriate to the aesthetic approach is 'how does this work hang together?'[8] He describes the meaning and purpose of 'hanging together' in the following way:

> . . . 'hanging together'—or, to use more genteel expressions, coherence, harmony, integrity, form—is not a special aesthetic property, recognizably the same in various works of art; it is more like a category than a property, suggesting the kinds of question (sic) which are to be asked rather than the sort of property that is to be looked for. We only arrive at the level of properties when we ask specific questions about specific works.[9]

Here 'hanging together' seems to be the most general category from which inquiry into aesthetic goodness begins. However, inquiry ends with the posing of questions which would reveal properties peculiar to the particular object under scrutiny. But how one gets from the category 'hanging together' to specific properties is left unclear by Passmore.

From a different perspective Hampshire also claims that there are no distinct 'aesthetic properties' or 'objects' and that aesthetic attention should focus upon a work's originality.[10] He also contends that:

> Anything whatever may be picked out as an object of aesthetic interest—anything which, when attended to carefully and apart from its uses, provides, by the arrangement of its elements and their suggestion to the imagination, some peculiar satisfaction of its own.[11]

Both Passmore and Hampshire are claiming, although they do not explicitly say so, that aesthetic judgements should be based upon a work of art's uniqueness. Their emphasis upon originality and specificity supports this interpretation of their views. However, the meaning of uniqueness is as vague here as it is in those theories which give it promi-

nence. In addition the theoretic value of this concept is further jeopardized by Mary Mothersill's charge that no interpretation of the claim that works of art are unique is both true and interesting.[12] According to her, true interpretations of uniqueness are non-controversial but valueless in the discussion of aesthetic value. These interpretations recognize the function of traditional 'rules' in the determination of aesthetic value but warn against their unrestricted application to specific works of art. On the other hand interesting interpretations deny the existence of any rules and attribute aesthetic value to a vague uniqueness. Hampshire, according to Mothersill, holds the latter interpretation[13] and Passmore, it seems to me, is party to the former.

Contrary to Mothersill I will contend in this article that the intuitions appearing in her categorization of uniqueness claims are basically correct but either incomplete or misguided. The first interpretation, which has been associated with Passmore, is correct in recognizing the function of traditional 'rules' in the determination of aesthetic value but incomplete since it neither defines uniqueness nor specifies its relationship to the 'rules' or to a work's general characteristics. On the other hand the second interpretation, associated with Hampshire, is correct in emphasizing uniqueness as a feature of aesthetic value but misguided in the assumption that 'rules' have no bearing on its determination. In support of this contention let us examine Mothersill's arguments which allow her to dismiss uniqueness as a viable concept in aesthetics.

Mothersill maintains that 'a uniqueness universally shared ceases to be a distinction' since a unique thing is the only one of its kind.[14] In support of these theses she discusses the following examples:

> (1) A person who collected antiques might say: 'Every piece of furniture in this room is unique.' But works of art, which can be classified in many different ways, by medium, author, style, cannot be unique in this sense. I might make a collection of artistic curiosities—the Empire State Building made out of tooth-picks and other unusual items—but then if I went on to crowd *all* works of art into a museum, my collection would lose its point.[15]
>
> (2) Suppose that there is a replica of the Venus de Milo, Venus II, and that it is sufficiently accurate to make it impossible for a connoisseur to tell by inspection which statue is the original. In line, colour, shape, texture, in perceptual qualities that give rise, as we ordinarily suppose to whatever beauty sculpture may have, there is no discernible difference. Could the philosopher still maintain that the Venus de Milo considered as an *aesthetic* object was unique? Of course, there are differences; chemists could find them. And the original Venus has her own history, her own niche in space and time. But this is no special distinction, since by these criteria Venus II is also unique.[16]

These quotations make a number of points which are interesting but not

always true. For the time being, however, let us concentrate on the claim that works of art cannot be unique since they can be classified in many different ways and since no special distinction can be attributed to spatio-temporal loci. Mothersill's conclusion that classification and mechanical ordering cannot capture the unique is, of course, correct if one accepts the assumption that a work of art is an isolated entity whose aesthetic value depends solely upon that which is perceivable. However, if this assumption is rejected, then a true and interesting interpretation of uniqueness can be given.[17] I shall attempt such an interpretation by arguing that despite the universality of historicity (spatio-temporal locus) a work's uniqueness can be defined within the context of its history. Thus it will be possible to claim uniqueness yet classify a work of art in a number of ways.

II

In the justification of my contentions I need to refer to several well known theses about the human situation. Among these is the fact that a newborn infant, unlike the tiger or elephant, does not repeat the cycle of birth, life and death of his predecessors, but rather evolves a life of his own by standing on the shoulders of his forebears. His forebears speak to him through the institutions of his culture, which are the fields within which social action occurs. Institutions have a number of functions but in the context of this paper my concern is primarily with their role as mechanisms of communication and as repositories of value.

Institutional conventions, *i.e.* the patterned structures and orderly processes available to the mind, are the means whereby the beliefs, feelings and attitudes of a people are articulated and communicated both within and without the culture. A work of art no less than a scientific theory, a religious belief, etc. exhibits the conventions of its cultural origins. These conventions are, in terms of communications theory, the redundancy which enables discernment not only of the work's meaning but also its deviation from the conventional. This redundancy is the basis for the 'rules' referred to by Mothersill and Passmore. However, as we shall see, these 'rules', which may be described as statistical generalizations governing the use of the elements in question,[18] are only applicable to particular historical periods and do not have the comprehensiveness of the generalizations to be found in most traditional aesthetic theories where concern has been with those properties common to all works of art irrespective of historical locus.

In the history of criticism the redundancy in a work of art has been

categorized by genre, technique, theme, style and so forth. Since some of these categories, as genre and theme for example, are cross-cultural I will delimit their use by employing the concept of style to circumscribe the redundancy existing in art works. In terms of mental sets stylistic redundancy is articulated through the ingrained habits of perception and the dispositions and responses of those who have learned through practice and experience to understand the style. These conventional habits, etc. involve reference to genre, theme, technique, etc. and are consistent with traditional historical periodization. However, these psychological mechanisms are not inviolate but are, like other habits and dispositions, subject to modification as knowledge and experience evolve. That they exist even though they may not be articulated can be demonstrated in the following way.

A few months ago Stefania, a friend of mine, bought a disk which was supposed to be a recording of a Beethoven cello sonata. She soon learned that the record company had committed a gross error. Curiosity led her to ask her friends to identify the composition. None of them could but all recognized the composition as being in the Romantic musical style and some thought that the piece sounded very much like the music of Brahms. However, a musician among the group insisted that it could not be by Brahms since he knew all of this composer's orchestral works. Because none of Stefania's friends were inquisitive or free to pursue the problem she had to await a postcard from the manufacturer to learn that the mislabelled side was Schumann's *Symphony No. 2 in C Major*. As can be surmised, all who participated in this event had developed the mental set for recognizing pieces of music in the Romantic style but had not developed those refinements necessary for distinguishing the stylistic characteristics peculiar to one composer and not to another.

The example also illustrates that if one wishes to distinguish the works of one artist from those of another within a style, then one must focus on additional differences. I propose the following conceptual scheme within the context of style for the purpose of noting these differences. The scheme is one among several alternatives which could be constructed. Each alternative would consist of similar categories but emphases would vary. A general scheme for differentiating by style is as follows: (The most general category is listed first and it is assumed that the objects being differentiated are works of art.) Differentiate first by style, then within a style by art form (architecture, painting, poetry, etc.), then by genre (sonata, sonnet, novel, etc.) then by the works of particular artists. A possible model for the scheme is a tree whose roots represent the human potential for artistic expression, whose trunk represents the generic class

'art', and whose large branches stand for the divisions of the generic class into classes representing styles. These large branches are covered by smaller branches standing for the various genres of the species. Still smaller branches emanate from those representing genre, which stand for the distinct contributions of a specific artist to the genre. These are covered with leaves of various shapes and colours, which symbolize specific works of art. All of the leaves are different yet they share family resemblances. Family resemblances will be greater if one is considering works in a particular genre by the same artist and less great if one is considering works in different styles. Even though the roots provide sustenance for the entire tree, it is the leaves (specific works of art) which give the tree its colour and the nutrition essential for further growth. However, each leaf is what it is by virtue of its position on the tree, *i.e.* its arrangement and its elements bear the marks of its spatio-temporal origination. Our tree has not been allowed to grow naturally but is one to which artists are constantly grafting leaves (works of art) which express their individuality within the context of the conventions of their time. But despite redundancy each leaf is a unique exemplification of genre and style.

For further clarification of uniqueness let us see how style relates to the coherence or unity of a work of art. Styles are, as previously claimed, probability systems subject to statistical analysis. As probability systems, however, they represent attempts to find order in the domain of the arts. But style has a different connotation for the artist. From his standpoint style circumscribes in a more or less definite way the parameters within which he creates, or the parameters he wishes to extend or discard. In keeping with this interpretation the creative process can be construed in part as the activity of actualizing stylistic possibilities or stylistic aberrations. An overview of the history of the various arts illustrates the fact that when a style has become conventional and uninteresting to artists through the actualization of enough possibilities then major changes are initiated which usually lead to the formulation of a new style. However, change may occur gradually and some works may exhibit elements of more than one style. Nevertheless few if any artists, when in the act of creating, conceive of styles as probability systems; yet these systems account for the fact that no one creates in a vacuum.

Even though these statistical generalizations may give one an idea of what a style is like, the generalizations do not necessarily prepare one for the way in which a specific work 'hangs together'. This is the case because each work of art consists of a peculiar selection and arrangement of elements from an indefinite number of possibilities. Each exemplification is unique in that no other work in the same style consists of an identical

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selection and arrangement of elements, but in some exemplifications there is more redundancy than in others. A work of art has, then, two interrelated dimensions: (1) its redundant aspect exhibited by the conventional order in the work, which is the basis for communication and the point of departure of the artist; and (2) its uniqueness—a singular combination and formal arrangement of elements whose singularity becomes meaningful within the context of style. Neither dimension can be ignored in a consideration of the coherence or unity of a work of art since its formal order consists of both aspects.

This interpretation of uniqueness counters Mothersill's claim that a unique thing is the only one of its kind. It is an interpretation consistent with our intuition that a person or thing can be unique yet possess characteristics or features in common with other persons or things. The claim is also consistent with Mothersill's categorization of theories of uniqueness into rule-oriented and non-rule-oriented views, but handles the deficiencies in each by indicating that aspect of a work that is rule-oriented and that aspect which is unique.

In addition I can now reject Mothersill's claim that Venus I and II have equivalent aesthetic value. According to Mothersill these two objects are aesthetically equivalent because there are no perceptual differences between them. However, when we try to locate Venus II on our tree we find that it is not there. It cannot be found because our scheme presupposes the distinction between art and non-art, a distinction which Mothersill and other proponents of aesthetic theories which focus on the aesthetic experience do not seem to require since this experience is defined so that anything perceived in a certain way might evoke it. As we have seen, Hampshire makes this assumption in the contention that 'anything whatever may be picked out as an object of aesthetic interest. . . .'[19] Passmore also seems to assume as much when he denies that disciplines are to be distinguished by subject matter. However, his recommendation that we engage in ruthless differentiation to escape the dreariness of aesthetics would sooner or later lead to the positing of the differences between, for example, a can of Campbell's soup and a painting of a can of Campbell's soup, for it is obvious that these constructs 'hang together' in quite different ways and for quite different reasons. I conclude then that were the distinction between art and non-art a presupposition of the process of denoting differences, then the aesthetic value of Venus I would not be equivalent to that of Venus II, a judgement which is quite consistent with our disposition to underrate the aesthetic value of a copy.

We are now prepared to reexamine the recommendations of Passmore and Hampshire in regard to the relationship between uniqueness and

aesthetic value. Let us turn first to Hampshire's interpretation of the uniqueness claim. His conclusion that 'neither an artist nor a critical spectator unavoidably needs an aesthetic . . .' is in terms of the view I have presented false. An aesthetic is required and a pluralistic one at that, for the originality or uniqueness of a work of art cannot be determined apart from a perspective which perceives a work as exemplifying in all of its detail a style. In addition his claim that one is travelling in the wrong direction 'when in aesthetics one moves from the particular to the general'[20] is also false, in the sense that stylistic characteristics will have been derived and are constantly checked against the collection of works to which they apply. The charge of circularity which might be raised here is not a serious one. The activity of formulating these limited generalizations and employing them in understanding and evaluating art is largely analogous to the activities of the historian who similarly articulates generalizations of this kind so that he may apprehend and evaluate as fairly as possible events which did occur at a particular time and place.[21] With these limited generalizations one avoids the triviality and vacuousness of the comprehensive generalizations of traditional aesthetic theories and one also has a focus from which to apprehend a work of art's uniqueness.

Let us now turn to Passmore's assertion that we only arrive at the level of properties when we ask specific questions about specific works. This assertion is correct since one can, as has been stated, enumerate characteristics common to a style and discover some of them in a work of art. However, one cannot know ahead of time which of these characteristics will occur nor how they will be exhibited in a specific work. Thus specific questions are to be posed from the perspective of style but are to be geared to the work itself and answered by reference to the unique way in which it exhibits a style.

My conclusion, then, is that the interpretation I have given of uniqueness is not only true but also interesting, for it focuses on the work of art itself and presents a framework for asking specific questions about the complexities of a work's coherence or unity. Also by following this prescription the respondent will neither impose upon a work a definition of art which is inappropriate nor estimate its value from a contemporary bias which may be distorting. An example of such distortion can be noted by turning to the Greek conception of art, which was, as far as we know, different from ours. For them art was *techne* or skill, a conception which covered poetry, medicine, dance, pottery making, etc. Traces of this meaning can be found in our language today when, for example, we speak of medicine as being an art. However, this meaning excludes one of the more important contemporary connotations of the term which grew out

of the movement of 'art for art's sake', a movement which emphasized the intrinsic value of a work and not the skills involved in its creation. Were we to apply some theories based upon such a definition to Greek or even medieval art, I fear that misvaluation would occur. A brief look at Clive Bell's aesthetic formalism will illustrate this possibility. Bell urges the perceiver to look through the representation in a work in order to arrive at its form, the only source of aesthetic value because form evokes a peculiar aesthetic emotion. Bell's recommendation may enhance awareness of the formal properties of a Greek or medieval work; nevertheless to ignore the role of representation or symbolism in the styles of such works leads to aesthetic misvaluation for these aspects are significant in the determination of the coherence or unity of such works. Therefore, in order to avoid such misvaluation, questions asked of specific works should point to properties denoting specific family resemblances and deviations from these resemblances so that aesthetic goodness, which I have in this paper associated with 'hanging together' or coherence, demonstrates, as Passmore claims, 'respect for the real differences between the works of art themselves. In this sense—art for art's sake.'[22]

REFERENCES

[1] A modified version of this paper was read at The Tulane Philosophy Conference, March 15, 1973.

[2] J. A. Passmore, 'The Dreariness of Aesthetics', in *Aesthetics and Language*, edited by William Elton (1959), 35–55; Stuart Hampshire, 'Logic and Appreciation', *op. cit.*, 161–9.

[3] Passmore, p. 55.

[4] Hampshire, p. 168.

[5] Mary Mothersill, '"Unique" as an Aesthetic Predicate', *The Journal of Philosophy*, LVIII, 16, 421–37.

[6] Passmore, pp. 37–42.

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] Hampshire, p. 168.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] Mothersill, p. 436.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 427–31.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 422.

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 422–3.

[17] I will not justify the rejection of the assumption of isolation for I have discussed the issue in 'The Concept of "Isolation" in 'Contemporary Aesthetic Theory', *Tulane Studies in Philosophy*, XIX, 1–19.

[18] Leonard Meyer, *Music, The Arts, and Ideas* (1967), p. 16.

[19] Hampshire, p. 168.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 169.

[21] See Joynt and Rescher 'The Problem of Uniqueness in History', *History and Theory*, I (1961), 150–62.

[22] Passmore, p. 55.

AESTHETIC SATISFACTION*

Hugo Meynell

IN AN article published in this journal a few years ago I argued that the goodness of a work of art is proportionate to the satisfaction it gives or could give.[1] This sounds trivial; but if suitably expanded, I believe that it provides a means of shifting a good deal of the rubble that clutters the foundations of aesthetics. For example it resolves the apparent dilemma that criticism *either* is a matter of making objectively verifiable statements about works of art which have no direct relevance to their value *or* consists in evincing emotions or subjective attitudes, to which arguments are ultimately irrelevant. For it is true or untrue, verifiable or falsifiable, that a work of art does or does not, probably may or certainly cannot, give satisfaction to those who may attend to it. Here are *facts* about works of art which have a direct bearing on their *value*, on how good or bad, great or insignificant, they are. Having thus dealt with the fact-value dichotomy, that *pons asinorum* of aesthetics, one can try to tackle the next two fundamental problems in the field: (i) What is aesthetic satisfaction? (ii) What kinds of artifacts, actions, productions, or what have you, tend best to promote such satisfaction? I intend in what follows to sketch an answer to the former question.

What I shall try to show is that aesthetic satisfaction characteristically consists of satisfaction gained from extension and clarification of consciousness. What, in the most general terms, is the human consciousness which we find it satisfying to extend and clarify? Human conscious living is a matter of experience, understanding, judgement and decision.[2] All human behaviour which is not merely reflex, which *is* human action strictly speaking, is to be understood as due to a certain combination in the agent of experience and lack of experience, of understanding and absence of understanding, of judgement and failure to judge, of decision and refusal to decide. Within experience, for present purposes, I include

* This paper was read at the Eighth National Conference of The British Society of Aesthetics in September, 1973.

sensations, feelings, moods and so on—data of consciousness which we may advert to or fail to advert to, raise questions about or not. By understanding I mean the activity of grasping relations between and meanings within the data of consciousness; for instance, that there may be a change in the weather from clues observed in the sky, or from an observed alteration in my neighbour's manner that he may be trying to attract my attention. By judgement I mean the activity of mind by which one determines which of the possibilities arrived at by understanding actually or probably accounts for a set of data. (Evidently our capacity for throwing out possible interpretations of sensory evidence is one thing; our capacity for determining which of them actually or probably accounts for the evidence is another. Many who are very proficient in the former capacity are very deficient in the latter, and *vice versa*.) As to decision, this is characteristically determined by our judgement both of the present situation and of what is likely to result from it by what we may do. The description of human consciousness which I have just given is obviously very brief and schematic, but I think it provides a basis sufficient for the giving of some idea of the nature of aesthetic satisfaction. Good art satisfies characteristically by showing us what it is to experience, to understand, to judge, or to decide. We are at once *enlightened* by it about the nature of these conscious operations of ours, and derive satisfaction from the *exercise* of them. Its effect is to militate against those limitations of our consciousness which are due to our physical and social environment. Bad art is to a great extent, when not merely technically incompetent, that which imposes or reinforces such limitations. It evokes tried feelings on tried topics by the use of tried devices. It does not invite one to try experiments with sensation, feeling, or the exercise of moral judgement. It never explores a conscious point of view of which it does not approve; when it condemns, it never understands. In what follows I shall call the full range of anyone's conscious operations and processes his 'conscious horizon'.[3]

If good art is related to the enlargement of consciousness in the manner which I have suggested, the tendency of oppressive political regimes to exercise censorship over the arts is easily accounted for. The effect of one's coming to understand human motives from the inside may well be to compromise one's whole-hearted devotion to a particular cause, one's unequivocal opposition to those who set themselves against it. Hence it may be risky for a political authority to allow the feelings of approval and disapproval to be suspended, experimented with or tried out on novel objects and situations—as tends to happen for the audience of good plays and the readers of good prose fiction—or indeed to encourage an unduly

careful scrutiny of the evidence through which one might come to understand the political situation as it really is. So it is that people are apt to be cajoled, flattered or threatened in such a way that they may observe, feel, understand, judge and decide only within the limits set by the ruling classes' assessment of their own self-interest. To open the path to unrestricted exercise of attentiveness to sensation and feeling, intelligence in understanding, reasonableness in judgement, and responsibility in decision, as good art tends to do, is to lead more or less directly to the transgression of such limits. It is important, by the way, that this argument does not tend to show that all censorship in all circumstances is unequivocally bad; only that *the more* a political authority has to restrict the conscious horizons of those subject to it, in order to maintain its own position, *the more* censorship it will need to exercise. Such restriction, at least in the short term, could conceivably be justifiable by the long-term interest of the majority, for example in times of war.

The nature of the theory I am trying to expound may perhaps be clarified by comparison and contrast with that of Collingwood, which it in many ways resembles.[4] According to Collingwood art is the expression of emotion, and to create or adequately to contemplate a successful work of art is to undergo an emotion which is incidental to the expression of another emotion. To feel anger, for instance, is one thing; to feel what it is to give one's anger adequate expression is another thing. On the view I am expounding here, what is at issue is not so much the emotion which goes with the expression of emotion as the satisfaction which goes with enlargement of one's conscious horizon. It can hardly be denied that appreciation of a work of art involves emotion of a positive rather than a negative kind; one *enjoys* the experience in some sense however misleading it is to call the experience 'pleasure' and however painful are the experiences incidentally described, expressed, or recalled by the work of art. And what gives rise to this appreciation or satisfaction is often something quite other than the expression of emotion. It may also be a sensation, a pattern of sensations, a grasping of intelligible relations or an appreciation of what it is to make a particular kind of judgement or decision. It seems artificial to say, for instance, that what is most satisfying about a Chinese vase or a Florentine architectural monument is the emotion which it expresses; on the other hand such things certainly do extend our conscious horizons by suggesting to us new possibilities of harmonious relation between lines, shapes, surface textures, and so on. Again the virtue of many paintings seems to reside in the manner in which they organize our visual impressions in ways different from those which are habitual with us, enabling us to see aspects of our surroundings in new contexts

and with new expectations. My own analysis seems to account more satisfactorily for such cases than does Collingwood's, though including within its range those cases to which his theory does justice. Collingwood's view that good art, in common with psychoanalysis, militates against 'corrupt consciousness'[5] is in my view quite correct, but more in harmony with my own general theory than with his. For it is not only our own emotions and moods which we may distort, may fail to recognize for what they are; but our sensations, our understanding, and our dispositions to judge and to decide may also be unclear to us, and may be revealed for what they are by good art.

One may say roughly that visual art excels in the clarification of sensation; that music excels in the depiction of mood; that literature is unique in its capacity to anatomise judgment and decision. Of course all of the arts do all of these things; but one would not expect of a piece of music or of a painting or sculpture such a scrutiny of the preconditions and consequences of a typical decision that one finds in novels like *Anna Karenin* or *Lord Jim*. Handel's music for *Alexander's Feast*, again, is sensually evocative almost throughout; as is the opening passage of Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*; but no piece of music could bring before us just what it is to see, to touch, to feel the resistance of physical objects to the pressure of one's hands, to the degree that do some of Cézanne's still lifes or Keats's *St. Agnes' Eve*. As to music in relation to mood, it may be doubted whether there has ever been a more telling evocation of total despair, punctuated by stabs of anguish, as the first movement of Mozart's Quintet in G minor (K 516).

The account I am setting out has some resemblance to the theory that the essence of aesthetic appreciation and communication is *Einfühlung* or sympathy.[6] But the idea of merging with another's soul, in such a way as to share his experience or feeling, is somewhat sententious and mysterious; whereas what I am trying to convey is essentially commonplace. By the exercise of our conscious faculties we can get to know of things and states of affairs which are independent of our conscious faculties; such would be admitted, I think, by anyone who was not an idealist or phenomenalist. Rather similarly, I would argue, by extension of our own habits of experience, understanding and judgement, we can apprehend how others may have experience, may understand or misunderstand, may have the habit of judging or deciding.

These reflections seem to shed some light on the relation between science and the arts. Art, one might say, has the function of extending and clarifying horizons in general;[7] while science is a specialized application of conscious horizons to the task of achieving a theoretical under-

standing of the real world. Science specializes in understanding actual data and at propounding theories which may be verified by reference to them; it is not a matter of mere possibilities of attention to data, understanding, etc. It seems evident that so far as one has an unduly narrow conscious horizon one may not attend properly to the data, may not envisage some of the theoretical possibilities, may not have the capacity to judge which of the theoretical possibilities envisaged best accounts for the data; and this surely provides the clue to the essential relation between art and science. If I am right about this, one would expect some correlation in cultures between notable artistic activity and the development of theory in philosophy and the sciences, the former rendering the latter possible. There seems some ground for holding that this correlation does in fact obtain. Both in the case of ancient Greek philosophy and science and in that of Renaissance science the era of advance was preceded by outstanding achievements in literature and the visual arts.

That we may by means of a work of art extend our conscious horizon through sharing the conscious horizon of another is particularly clear in the case of the mimetic arts. It is brought out well in the following extract from a critical notice by Edwin Denby of Martha Graham's ballet *Appallachian Spring:* 'The dance style of the piece is abrupt and angular and it suggests in this way the rude pioneer artifacts of the place and time it describes. It suggests farmer vigour and clumsy farmer mirth.' The ballet as a whole constitutes 'a credible and astonishing evocation of that real time and place. To show us our country ancestors and our inherited mores as real is a feat of genius no one else who has touched the pioneer subject in ballet has been able to accomplish'.[8] The merit of this ballet, one would infer, is largely due to the manner in which it enables the spectator to extend his horizon by apprehending what it is for people to feel and be disposed to act as the pioneers did. The criterion is even more obviously applicable to novels. One critic writes *à propos* of James Joyce: '*Portrait* is the first novel in the English language in which a passion for thinking is fully presented; *Ulysses* is the first novel in which the activity of thought is the central concern and the determining influence on the form.' Another remarks on 'Solzhenitsyn's extraordinary gift for coming close to reality, so that only the thinnest of veils seems to separate one from it'.[9] In fact Joyce's excellence consists largely in his capacity to extend our horizon by bringing home to us what it is to have one's horizon determined by thinking; Solzhenitsyn's in his ability to bring before us with extraordinary vividness what it is to sense, to feel, to strive, act and suffer within certain political and social situations.

Works of visual art may extend our conscious horizons by giving a jolt

to our ingrained habits of perception and appreciation. A man may well first come fully to appreciate the beauty of the English countryside after he has looked at it through the eyes of Constable. It is said that a lady once complained to Turner, in connection with his rendering of a sunset, that she had never seen one like it. 'But madam', said Turner, 'don't you wish you could?'[10] The range of pleasures possible from the habit of envisaging one's visual field as a two-dimensional pattern of light and colour may be brought home to someone by Impressionist paintings. Monet's London pictures do not alter the fact that urban fogs are inconvenient, repulsive to the senses of smell and taste and dangerous to health; but they do bring out their possibilities as objects of intense visual enjoyment. The artists associated with *Der Stijl* deliberately aimed to foster in their public a consciousness of what our whole environment *might* be from the point of view of visual satisfaction. It is worth emphasizing that a painting may enhance aspects of our experience other than the visual. In particular it may have what Berenson called 'tactile values', the capacity to bring home to the spectator, through the arrangement in two dimensions of colours, shapes and lines, our consciousness of what it is to touch or push objects of various weights, textures, and degrees of hardness or softness. The same applies *a fortiori*, of course, to works of sculpture.

The capacity of music to convey emotions and moods is obvious. (*How* music does this is an important and difficult question, from which I prescind here; all I want to do is to adduce examples to show *that* this is done, and to suggest that the goodness or badness of pieces of music is a matter quite largely of *how effectively* it is done.) The vindictive fury of the mob demanding the crucifixion of Jesus in Bach's *St. John Passion* is conveyed by a combination of loudness, minor key, harsh discords, and a rapid and disjointed rhythm. The bass aria just before the end of the *St. Matthew Passion* expresses what is virtually the opposite mood of peace and consolation; there are no discords, the rhythm is smooth and rather slow, the mode is major, and the melodic intervals are mainly conjunct or over the notes of the common chord. The beginning of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* is an almost indecent paraxysm of desperation with its wide melodic skips, minor key, brassy instrumentation and disturbed rhythm. Anthony Milner, in describing part of his symphony, has spoken of 'an anguished theme on the 'cellos, rebuked by angry chords from the rest of the orchestra'.[11] The final section of Handel's *Saul* moves from intense grief, through a healing meditation on past glory, to a mighty resurgence of the will to live in the final chorus. Beethoven said of the opening motto of his Fifth Symphony, 'so Fate knocks on the door'; and the symphony as a whole seems to convey a colossal threat experienced,

receding, experienced once again, and finally confronted and surmounted.

Attempts to affix programmes to pieces of music are often absurd; but they do often have a certain plausibility, the reason for which seems worth investigating. Communist critics in particular are disposed to relate musical compositions to the inauguration, vicissitudes and eventual triumph of the socialist revolution. What is true is that music can express such emotions and moods as frustration, suffering, despair, joy, elation, and the sense of achievement; all these are necessarily involved in men's efforts to change the present social order into a comparatively just and happy one for the future. A piece of music may, in fact, have an analogy with a political or social process in that involvement in or meditation of the latter is apt to give rise to the same emotions and moods as are conveyed by the former. (Just the same considerations evidently apply to religious music.) So it is that, in a rather loose sense, a piece of music may be held to represent or to be about a process or situation—the more plausibly when the composer declares that such is his intention or when his music is a setting for an appropriate text. Absurdity arises only when music is held to be representative in the comparatively direct and unequivocal manner of many paintings and works of literature.

The manner in which literature may satisfy by reflecting and anatomizing conscious experience, whether that experience is itself pleasant or distressing, is well brought out by the following passage from the work of a Victorian author.

> There is a peculiar happiness which is known to the essayist. There is a virtue about his work to draw the sting from the little worries of life. If you fairly look some petty vexation of humanity in the face, and write an account of it, it will never annoy you so much any more. It recurs: and it annoys you: but you have a latent feeling of satisfaction at finding how exactly accurate was your description of it; how completely your present sensation runs into the mould you had made. It is a curious thing, too, that there is a certain pleasure in writing about a thing which was very unpleasant when it happened to one.[12]

This particular example may be a little trivial, but its principles can be applied to more impressive instances. In George Eliot's *Felix Holt* Mrs. Transome is the great character she is because we see so clearly in her what it is to make a certain kind of decision, and the preconditions and ultimate results of doing so. In Trollope's *The Prime Minister* the reader comes to know a bad man from the inside; for all that he clearly understands what Lopez is doing, and the intensity of the suffering that he is inflicting upon his wife and his father-in-law, he can also see Lopez's actions from Lopez's point of view. This rather complex state of mind, in which a reader can withhold neither sympathy nor condemnation, is

one that can be brought about, I think, only by very good writers. Dante achieves it in the *Inferno*, for example in the Paolo and Francesca episode. Notoriously, Milton does not really achieve it in his portrayal of Satan in *Paradise Lost*; the weight of sympathy one feels for this character counteracts the moral impact of the poem as a whole. To appreciate John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* is to feel on one's pulses not only what a torment Jimmy Porter is to others, but also what a torment he is to himself. One has missed a dimension in *King Lear* if one does not see the king, at any rate early on in the play, as a spoilt old man as well as a victim of inhuman wrongs. I think that the critical disputes about Dickens during the last few decades have been due quite largely to the fact that Dickens excels in depicting characters from the outside—as what they are to others—but is by no means so adept at bringing out what they are to themselves. One could multiply instances in illustration of the thesis that literature excels at the depiction of judgement and decision, and that many of its most telling effects are due to the contrast between people as they are within their own conscious horizons on the one hand, and as they are within the conscious horizons of other persons, whether the author or reader or some other character within the same fiction, on the other. To take an example almost at random, the end of William Golding's *The Inheritors* secures the effect that it does largely by means of such a switch of perspectives.

My discussion of examples from the arts has been very sketchy and superficial, but I hope it has done something to achieve my purpose; that is, of showing that the satisfaction we derive from works of art is due largely to the manner in which they extend and clarify our conscious horizons.

REFERENCES

[1] 'Remarks on the Foundations of Aesthetics' (*British Journal of Aesthetics*, January 1968).

[2] This account of consciousness is derived from B. Lonergan, *Insight* (London, 1957) and *Method in Theology* (London, 1972).

[3] The application of the visual metaphor of a 'horizon' to consciousness in this way is due to Lonergan.

[4] Cf. R. G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (1963), especially pp. 109–11.

[5] *Ibid.*, 216–21. Cf. also Lonergan, *Insight*, xi–xii, 191–206.

[6] Cf. Herbert Read, *The Meaning of Art* (Penguin ed., 1949), 30.

[7] Ezra Pound writes to rather similar effect: 'The function of an art is to free the intellect from the tyranny of the affects', and 'to strengthen the perceptive faculties and free them from encumbrance' (*Selected Prose* 1909–1965, ed. William Cookson; quoted by Philip Toynbee in *The Observer*, 4 February 1973).

[8] Edwin Denby, *Looking at the Dance* (1968), 319–20.

[9] Seamus Deane and Goronwy Rees, *Encounter*, Nov. 1972, 42 and 29.

[10] I cannot now find the reference for this story, which for all I know may be legendary.

[11] In a talk on the BBC Third Programme early in 1973.

[12] *The Recreations of a Country Parson* (1862) p. 368.

A REVELATORY FUNCTION OF ART[1]

James Jobes

IT SEEMS to me that works of art can serve in an important way as straightforward sources of information and that in some cases of that sort we might speak of them as revealing things to us.[2] However, my purpose here is to call attention to a different sort of revelatory function of art—one which does not involve supplying us with new information or evidence. I shall be following, in very large measure, some views and suggestions put forward by John Wisdom.[3]

I

In 'Gods' Professor Wisdom writes:

> 'A difference as to the facts', 'a discovery', 'a revelation', these phrases cover many things. Discoveries have been made not only by Christopher Columbus and Pasteur, but also by Tolstoy and Dostoievsky and Freud. Things are revealed to us not only by the scientists with microscopes, but also by the poets, the prophets, and the painters.[4]

Some indications as to what Professor Wisdom has in mind are to be found earlier in his paper. For example, we find him speaking of how 'it is possible to have before one's eyes all the items of a pattern and still to miss the pattern'.[5]

He seems, then, to be concerned especially with cases where what we need is not new data or evidence. Other parts of his paper suggest that he has in mind cases in which what is needed is to get us to 'see' or to notice something we have missed although we have all the 'data' already. And these, I think, are the sorts of cases in which he would want to emphasize the ability of 'the poets, the prophets, and the painters' to reveal things to us.[6]

Such cases of 'getting to see' will at least in general count as cases of revealing. The applicability of 'reveal' seems to depend upon the literal or metaphorical applicability of some such expression as 'shedding light', 'uncovering something' or 'dispelling blindness'. And some expression of

this sort will, normally at least, be applicable to a case of the kind we are considering.

Two further things should be noted before we get down to cases: (1) In connection with one of his examples of how a remark can 'get someone to see', Wisdom says: 'These simple words may be enough. They may work on Mr. A. like magic. But they may not.'[7] This unpredictability is fairly general. In consequence, it will only be possible to consider how a given object or utterance *might* work in 'getting someone to see'. (2) A careful examination of possible differences among cases of 'getting to see' would lead us to a comparison of noticing, realizing, recognizing, 'seeing in a new light', etc. I shall not undertake such a comparison. However, I think the cases with which we shall deal could all be included under the vague description 'a gaining of a new apprehension of a part of reality'.[8]

II

I shall now try to illustrate by a variety of examples some of the ways in which works of art might help us out in cases where we have all the necessary facts or evidence, but fail to 'see' something. The cases can be roughly divided into cases of 'saying' and cases of 'showing'. The latter class will include instances of both verbal and pictorial 'pictures'. I shall also present examples of both more and less straightforward saying and showing.

A relatively straightforward case is suggested in Browning's *Fra Lippo Lippi*. In defending his 'naturalistic' painting in the face of such injunctions as 'Paint the soul, never mind the legs and arms', Browning's Fra Lippo says:

> . . . Don't object, 'His works
> Are here already; nature is complete:
> Suppose you reproduce her—(which you can't)
> There's no advantage! you must beat her then.'
> For, don't you mark? we're made so that we love
> First when we see them painted, things we have passed
> Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
> . . . . . .
> . . . Have you noticed, now,
> Your cullion's hanging face? A bit of chalk,
> And trust me but you should, though! . . . .

This seems to suggest not only that a picture could 'draw our attention to' the face, but also that it could get someone to see that the face is the sort

of face it is. And it seems to me a plausible suggestion that even a straightforward picture might serve to dispel someone's 'blindness' to a familiar object, or to 'shed new light upon' it.

There are various ways in which a picture might do better than the object itself in getting our attention. For example, pictures may gain prominence just by being exhibited, their aesthetically valuable qualities may be arresting, and a picture of a familiar object may possess the charm of novelty relative to the object itself. New attention to the picture may lead to new attention to the object.[9] And such new attention is sometimes just what it takes to 'get us to see' something we had missed. Moreover there are various ways in which a painting might also 'get us to see' something by *pointing up* noteworthy features of an object. Many of these devices involve no departure or only moderate departure from 'realistic' representation. Examples would include the portrayal of someone in a typical pose, and the use of moderate exaggeration.

While the 'hanging face' case involves only a particular object, it is also possible for a picture to get us to notice something general. For example a picture of a cat, whether or not it portrays *any* actual cat, might well get someone to notice, when he had not noticed it before, how cats (in general) crouch to eat. Again the straightforward, non-allegorical etchings among those in Goya's *Disasters of War* series could only 'give evidence' about the particular war they depict. But they might well, I think, lead us fully to realize something about the horror of war in general—something for which we might already have abundant evidence.

We have so far considered pictorial representation. But *verbal* 'pictures' might similarly 'get us to see' something. One plausible example is Marc Slonim's suggestion that Gogol's contemporaries, perhaps to their surprise, 'had to own that the protagonists of *Dead Souls* were living portraits of people they all knew very well'.[10] And Slonim appears to suggest that both the exaggeration and the truth to life of the book were of value in getting people to see the truth.

Examples of works of art 'getting us to see' by straightforwardly *saying* things are not likely to be very frequent. Straightforward *particular* remarks are often illuminating only in the presence of particular objects or of particular circumstances,[11] and these conditions are not usually satisfied by remarks in literature. *General* remarks in literature, when they are not doubtful as to their literal truth, are often obvious and unilluminating.[12] Still one *can* find examples of straightforward remarks in literature which might be illuminating.

Let us turn now to less straightforward cases. A case which Wisdom

sets out will serve as an example of the revelatory function of 'odd' remarks:

> Imagine someone is trying on a hat. She is studying the reflection in a mirror like a judge considering a case. There's a pause and then a friend says in tones too clear, 'My dear, it's the Taj Mahal.' Instantly the look of indecision leaves the face in the mirror. All along she has felt there was about the hat something that wouldn't quite do. Now she sees what it is.[13]

Wisdom goes on to say:

> And all this happens in spite of the fact that the hat could be seen perfectly clearly and completely before the words 'The Taj Mahal' were uttered. And the words were not effective because they referred to something hidden like a mouse in a cupboard, like germs in the blood, like a wolf in sheep's clothing.[14]

Here, then, is a case in which by saying something odd something is revealed to someone without the provision of data or evidence.

What advantage might this sort of 'odd' remark have? Wisdom suggests that: 'People sometimes speak wildly but if we tame their words what we get are words which are tame and very often words which don't do anything near what the wild ones did.'[15] His point seems to be that the tame words may not be arresting enough to get us to see or that they may fail to suggest or to put things in the new perspective that we need. But there is also a second consideration: there may sometimes be no 'tame words' which will really fit.[16]

Not all odd remarks would work in just the same way as 'It's the Taj Mahal' in 'getting someone to see'. Some would not need to be uttered in a special context. And some might 'get someone to see' not so much by being 'immediately' illuminating as by prompting reflection upon many items of his experience. Such a remark as 'Architecture is frozen music' might illustrate both these points.

The above examples are like 'things the poets say', and we can expect comparable remarks in literature to function sometimes in a similar way in 'getting us to see'.

Things may be revealed to us also by remarks which make more literal sense than the 'odd' sort, but which are uncertain or false in their literal sense. The remark of Dostoyevsky's Father Zossima that 'hell is the suffering of being unable to love', which appears to be in its context literally a claim about the character of existence in hell, might well prove illuminating about 'this life' even to someone who was unprepared to grant that there is a 'future life'.[17] Perhaps there are also remarks which could be illuminating precisely in being false. In *Orthodoxy* Chesterton proposes that certain sorts of tales

> say that apples were golden only to refresh the forgotten moment when we found that they were green. They make rivers run with wine only to make us remember, for one wild moment, that they run with water.[18]

Turning now to the role of unstraightforward '*showing*', we may consider first the role of unstraightforward *verbal* 'pictures'. That such pictures can 'get us to see' is suggested by Wisdom:

> A dramatist or one who writes a strange story of Lilliput or Brobdingnag may show us in human nature something we have often encountered in everyday life and yet have not recognized, remarked.[19]

In 'Gods', Professor Wisdom speaks of how

> . . . the merits and demerits of a line of action may be brought out by setting beside it other actions.[20]

He continues:

> To use Susan Stebbing's example: Nathan brought out for David certain features of what David had done in the matter of Uriah the Hittite by telling him a story about two sheepowners.[21]

The Biblical episode to which Wisdom refers[22] goes this way: King David, having got with child Bathsheba, wife of Uriah the Hittite, got Uriah out of the way by having him put in the forefront of the hardest fighting in an attack upon a city, so that he was killed. The account continues:

> And the Lord sent Nathan to David. He came to him, and said to him, 'There were two men in a certain city, the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had very many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing but one little ewe lamb, which he had bought. And he brought it up, and it grew up with him and with his children; it used to eat of his morsel and drink from his cup, and lie in his bosom, and it was like a daughter to him. Now there came a traveller to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take one of his own flock or herd to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him, but he took the poor man's lamb, and prepared it for the man who had come to him.' Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, 'As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.'
>
> Nathan said to David, 'You are the man.'

After, to be sure, some further remarks and a promise of Divine punishment from Nathan, David came to say: 'I have sinned against the Lord.'

It appears, then, that David came to see, partly at least through the influence of the picture presented in the parable, something of the

'demerits' of his 'line of action'. And this happened although the picture in the parable was not straightforwardly a picture of his deed. Nathan's parable, like the 'Taj Mahal' remark, was addressed to a particular situation. But it could be brought to bear upon other situations. And there are parables which speak to common, and perhaps even universal, conditions. Dante's picture of hell might provide further examples of such unstraightforward 'showing'. A reader unable to accept the very notions of hell or even of sin, much less to take for fact Dante's particular imaginative picture of hell, might still be brought to see a good deal about human psychology by the way in which Dante groups and ranks sins and allots punishments.

'Odd' or 'inaccurate' *visual* representations might similarly serve a revelatory function. Even for someone who does not know what to make of its distortions and apparently symbolic figures, Picasso's *Guernica* might serve, like the more straightforward Goya etchings mentioned earlier, to bring out in a new or more vivid way the horrors of war. (I shall not try to explore here what *further* revelatory power it might have when its 'odd' features are understood and, perhaps, reflected upon. However, we might expect to find something somewhat like the function of 'odd talk' as dicussed earlier.)

Finally, it seems that representations, verbal or visual, might sometimes be illuminating just in their failure to be true to life. Coming to see, of a given representation, that 'that's not how it is' might well make for a better apprehension of 'how it is'. For example, in seeing that 'that's not Smith's nose' or that 'that's not quite how a chicken cocks its head', we might come to a new or a better recognition of how Smith's nose *is*, or how a chicken *does* cock its head.

I shall conclude this section with a few further comments: (1) Neither music without words nor totally non-representational visual designs can, *so far as I can see*, perform the function of 'saying' or 'showing'. And it seems, although I am not sure of the point, that such works are consequently unable to perform the function of 'getting us to see'. To be sure, our experience of such works might by some sort of association *occasion* illuminating reflections. But in such a case would the work and our experience of it sufficiently shape or control the reflection that we would be willing to say it was the work and our experience of it that 'got us to see'?[23] (2) Is revelatory capacity of the sort under discussion related to the value of works of art considered just as art? I do *not* wish to suggest that a work cannot be a good one without such revelatory capacity. For example, I do not mean to imply by the remarks just above that music and non-representational art, because they seem poor prospects for

revelatory capacity, are on that account inferior kinds of art. Moreover I am sympathetic to the frequently held view that there are peculiarly aesthetic merits as distinguished from, for example, moral or intellectual values or merits. Again I am in general sympathetic to the view that aesthetic merits should be the sole, or at least the main, basis of the aesthetic (art, literary, etc.) critic's praise.[24] But need we go on to say that revelatory capacity of the sort dealt with here is irrelevant to proper aesthetic criticism? I suspect that a careful exploration of this question might enable us to say, without abandoning the view that aesthetic merits should be the primary basis of critical appraisal, that reference to this sort of revelatory capacity may often be appropriate in support of critical praise. But a working out of this lies outside the scope of the present paper.[25] (3) We might look briefly at a kind of objection which might be raised about some of the examples proposed earlier. In his discussion of the 'Taj Mahal' example Wisdom observes that someone might make this protest about the change in the lady trying on the hat:

> The change is a change in feeling. It may be expressed in the words 'I see now' or 'It's impossible' but that is just an expression of a different attitude to the hat.[26]

Wisdom's main response, and rightly so, is to connect the 'Taj Mahal' case with similar ones:

> . . . it isn't true that the words about the hat only influence the hearer's feelings to the hat. They alter her apprehension of the hat just as the word 'A hare' makes what did look like a clump of earth *look* like an animal, a hare in fact; just as the word 'A cobra' may change the look of something in the corner by the bed.[27]

But in addition it might be well to look at one possible source of the impulse to make this sort of protest. Wisdom represents this protest as arising out of an inability to see how any gain in knowledge *could* be involved. The protester has just said:

> In this case nobody shows anybody anything—all that happens is that somebody is persuaded not to buy a hat. The hat you say was seen perfectly clearly from the first. Now it isn't seen any more clearly at the finish.[28]

Our protester has presumably noticed, as we all have, how we come to gain knowledge by being supplied with new data or evidence. Perhaps he has noticed also that we can come to new knowledge through the deductive eliciting of the consequences of facts we already have. But it is all too easy to stop here and to overlook the further range of cases which we have called cases of 'getting to see'.[29] Or again it is possible to recognize that there are a *few* such cases, and yet mistakenly to suppose that they are quite rare and 'queer' cases.[30]

III

Finally, let us look at the question of the utility and importance for our understanding of the world of the revelatory function of art that we considered above. I shall only sketch very briefly some points which suggest that works of art might be especially well suited to 'getting us to see'. (1) It is often suggested that artists (taking the term broadly, so as to include literary 'artists') can see things better than most of us, and thus are especially well situated to make discoveries. This may not be true of all artists, or even of all good ones, but it is surely true that some artists are unusually perceptive.

Wisdom offers some suggestions as to the nature of this perceptiveness. For example, he writes:

> It is well recognized that poets may use words in unusual ways to present what they see when in a childlike and yet grown-up experience they look at things afresh.[31]

But freshness of vision is not the whole story. Elsewhere, after referring once again to the need to 'become as little children' if 'we wish to find the truth', Wisdom goes on to suggest also the need to be 'a person with experience and one who sees things now in the light of that experience'.[32] Perhaps, then, it is because of a happy combination of innocence and experience that some artists notice things that we are apt to miss. (2) It seems also that works of art may be in certain ways especially well suited to getting *us* to see what the artist has seen.

(a) I suggested earlier that the ability of works of art to gain and to focus our attention may help them to overcome 'blindness to the familiar'.

(b) Also they may be peculiarly able to get past our 'defences' against seeing. (Compare the example of Nathan's parable.)

(c) Again, we noted earlier how Wisdom proposes that *odd* sayings and pictures may do especially well in getting us to see. One reason which Wisdom gives for this is connected with his emphasis upon the need for 'looking at things afresh'. In explaining this need, he remarks that 'concepts . . . are apt to become a network which confines our minds'[33] and again that

> To gain a new apprehension of any part of reality we have to shake off old habits of apprehension crystallized probably in a well-known mode of presentation.[34]

Odd sayings and pictures may jog us out of old habits of apprehension and lead us to new apprehension.[35] And while artists are not the only source of odd sayings and pictures, they are a major source of them.

(d) Works of art have also the advantages of concreteness and the

ability to present the universal in the particular, although once again these are not the exclusive property of art.[36]

REFERENCE NOTES

[1] This paper is largely derived from my dissertation, 'On Revealing: An Examination of Some Questions Concerning Art as a Source of Knowledge' (University of Virginia, 1967). A number of the suggestions in this paper are developed more fully there. The dissertation takes the form of a rejoinder to the discussion of 'the Revelation Theory' in section 21 of Professor Monroe Beardsley's *Aesthetics: Problems in the Philosophy of Criticism* (New York, 1958).

[2] These claims are elaborated in the earlier parts of my dissertation.

[3] All the papers to which I shall refer are printed or reprinted in *Philosophy and Psycho-analysis* (1957) or in *Paradox and Discovery* (1965). Page references for the papers will be given in terms of pages in these volumes. I shall abbreviate the titles of the volumes to '*P. and P-A.*' and '*P. and D.*' (I shall not try to explain much the larger contexts in which Wisdom's suggestions occur.)

[4] *P. and P-A.*, p. 154.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 153.

[6] See, e.g., *P. and P-A.*, pp. 224 and 228.

[7] *P. and P-A.*, p. 264.

[8] I borrow this usefully broad form of words from Wisdom (*ibid.*, p. 263).

[9] There are those who would argue that this shouldn't happen if we are looking at a painting in the right way. *E.g.* this *seems* to be the view of Clive Bell. See his *Art* (New Edition), (New York, 1958), p. 27 and pp. 29–30. But I think this view is mistaken. Monroe Beardsley argues quite well, I think, that the representational aspect of a representational painting may often be relevant to its aesthetic value. See his *Aesthetics*, cited above, pp. 299–305. And further, it seems to me that not only attention to the representational aspect of the work but also at least some kinds of attention to what is represented may be compatible with a 'proper approach' to a painting.

[10] *An Outline of Russian Literature* (New York, 1959), pp. 51–2.

[11] See, *e.g.*, two of Wisdom's instances: 'Snakes' and 'It's a map', *P. and D.*, p. 3 and *P. and P-A.*, p. 264.

[12] This is not to say that obvious or platitudinous remarks can *never* be illuminating.

[13] 'The Logic of God', *P. and D.*, p. 2.

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 2–3. Wisdom discusses this same example more briefly, but in similar terms, in *P. and P-A.*, p. 248.

[15] *P. and D.*, p. 4.

[16] Compare John Austin's observation in 'A Plea for Excuses' that 'fact is richer than diction'—*Philosophical Papers* (1961) Cf. also Monroe Beardsley on problems about translation of metaphors into similes, *op. cit.*, pp. 136–8, and his claim, p. 144, that somestimes a metaphor 'augments the resources of our language'. And cf. Wisdom, *P. and D.*, p. 132.

[17] The remark is used as a remark about 'this life' in J. D. Salinger's story 'For Esme—with Love and Squalor', *Nine Stories* (New York, 1954), p. 79.

[18] *Orthodoxy* (New York, 1959), p. 54.

[19] *P. and D.*, pp. 119–20.

[20] *P. and P-A.*, p. 160.

[21] *Loc. cit.*

[22] II Samuel 11–12. I shall quote from the Revised Standard Version.

[23] I would suggest also that in such cases,

much more than in cases of the sort referred to in note 9 above, whatever reflection the work touched off might tend to lead us *away* from attention to the work itself

[24] For views of this sort, see, *e.g.*, Beardsley, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 456–7 and sect. 28.

[25] Such a working out might take account of such points as these:

(1) J. O. Urmson's suggestion, in 'What Makes a Situation Aesthetic' (*Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supp. Vol. XXXI, 1957), that 'we are inclined to allow in non-aesthetic criteria "by courtesy" when we are evaluating a work of art, so that we may even include intellectual merit'.

(2) That some of the very qualities of a work which make for aesthetic merit may be main factors in its ability to 'get us to see'. (Cf. below, Part III, section 2.)

The latter point may partly explain why we might more readily allow 'It may shed for the reader new light on the character of jealousy' as a point in favour of critical praise, 'by courtesy' or perhaps even 'properly', but less readily allow 'It gives the reader a rather good picture of British police procedure' as such a point (though it is of course an allowable *remark* for a critic to make).

[26] *P. and D.*, p. 3.

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4. See also Wisdom's argument, *P. and P-A.*, p. 246, that 'showing him the beauty of the picture, the wrongness of the act' does not amount *merely* to producing a new attitude.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

[29] See Wisdom's comments in connection with the 'Taj Mahal' case, *P. and D.*, pp. 6–7. Cf. also his discussion of cases where 'no one gives anyone any news' in *P. and P-A.*, pp. 252–3, and his discussion of the related question of the meaningfulness of 'odd' statements, *P. and P-A.*, pp. 266 ff. (See in particular his reference, on pp. 269–70, to 'the evil effect of the cramping idea that every surprising, revealing statement must be justified either by giving information which the person surprised lacks or by taking him through a process of strict deduction which he had been incapable of carrying out'.)

[30] See again *P. and D.*, pp. 6–7. Notice also Wisdom's comments on how many cases there are in which our gain in knowledge is a matter only *in part* of gaining new data or of coming to be able to make new predictions. See, *e.g.*, *P. and P-A.*, p. 270, and *P. and D.*, p. 7.

[31] *P. and P-A.*, p. 264.

[32] *P. and D.*, pp. 137–8. See also *P. and P-A.*, p. 263.

[33] *P. and D.*, p. 137.

[34] *P. and P-A.*, p. 263.

[35] See *P. and P-A.*, p. 263 and pp. 177–8.

[36] On the utility of concreteness and on the need to combine it with abstraction and generalization, see *P. and P-A.*, p. 261. Cf. also *P. and D.*, p. 138. On the universal in the particular, see some of my examples above and *P. and P-A.*, p. 225. See also, for an early example of this old theme, Aristotle on poetry as more philosophic than history, *Poetics*, 1451 b.

MUSIC AND THE EDUCATION OF THE EMOTIONS

Keith Swanwick

THE TERM 'education of the emotions' has occurred recently in philosophical and educational discussions, sometimes with reference to, and sometimes with complete disregard of, the arts. The purpose of this paper is to examine the possible meaning of such a phrase and to indicate the role of music in such an education.

A great deal of the debate seems to centre on a dichotomy between reason and emotion that goes back at least to Plato and his analogy of the chariot rider, the rational part of man, struggling to control the black horses of emotion. A more recent version of this view has been given by R. S. Peters when he uses the term 'passivity' to indicate that emotions are events that happen to us and with which we have to cope, rather than activities which we ourselves initiate.[1] (Thus in a situation of fear our knees 'knock', we do not 'knock' them.) Here we have a notion of emotions as independent forces which need either to be kept in check by reason and social training or (after Spinoza) overcome by another emotion. They may also be discharged in cathartic activities like games and the arts. A somewhat different view of the reason–emotion relationship, put forward by G. H. Bantock, is that the emotional aspect of human experience is central and crucial and that in comparison the rational activities are pedestrian and fitful and play a very small role in the life of most people.[2] On this view we should look to educational processes for 'refinement' and development of our emotions, rather than for repression alternating with catharsis. The arts, myths, ritual and religion might then be seen as contributing to an education of the emotions in that they provide symbolic experiences which may both reflect and shape our emotional responses to the world of objects and other people.

Now it is clear from a closer examination of the writings of both Peters and Bantock that concepts of reason and emotion cannot be held apart for long in any consideration of education and the emotions. The affective

and the cognitive interact, and it is worth examining these views in a little more detail to bring out the kind of relationships that are envisaged.

For Peters education of the emotions should assist us to develop 'appropriate appraisals', that is to say we should hold well informed beliefs about the situations in which emotional responses are forthcoming. For example, it would be inappropriate for a husband to be jealous if such an emotion were the result of his misunderstanding his wife's actions. On this view drama and literature may be ways in which our 'capacity for making appraisals' can be extended by an observation of human situations displayed in play or poetry or a novel and by, as it were, learning lessons from them. Thus our emotions might be said to be educated in that they are informed by cognitive processes and are only invoked in appropriate situations.

What seems obvious about this way of 'educating the emotions' is that no such education is taking place. No modification of any emotional condition occurs; we merely prevent ourselves from having the wrong emotional reaction to a given situation. This is doubtless very important for a person's education in terms of developing powers of observation, discrimination and judgement, but it does nothing for an emotion when it is considered appropriate. For example, it was once considered by many that it was appropriate to fear, hate and consequently to torture witches. Since we no longer believe in witches in the same way we no longer have these strong emotions in reaction to people who might once have been thought of as witches. But large numbers of people do seem to have strong beliefs about, say, Jews, sexual deviants and communists, and this century has seen plenty of fear, hatred and torture of those who are seen in these categories. Our appraisals have moved on, perhaps been rendered more appropriate, but the emotional responses seem more or less the same as they were. Now it is possible, I suppose, to argue that we might eventually develop a set of appraisals which made no group of people, ethnic or political, or any individual, the object of such emotions. Even so we cannot be said to be educating the emotions as such but will be simply removing the situations which trigger them off and perhaps, eventually, will get rid of them altogether. Indeed the general effect of Peters's statements on the subject is that emotions are to be avoided if possible and if not, then must be endured as an unfortunate experience.

Bantock, on the other hand, suggests a rather different relationship between cognitive and affective elements. 'Human development proceeds, in part at least, out of an ability to make finer and finer distinctions.' An emotion becomes more 'precise' when it is presented in a symbol-structure such as an art product, and many subtle shades of feeling may be displayed

which help us towards a process of differentiation, which may refine and structure our ways of responding emotionally to situations. Affect is 'communicable' and it might be possible actually to teach ways of feeling; and Bantock suggests that mothers do this for their children when they give patterns of response to, say, being hurt, disappointed or rewarded. Thus a mother who panics easily, or who worries, or who is perpetually cheerful, may have children who adopt a similar affective stance. (What evidence there is for this is not mentioned.) On this view refinement and communication of emotions are educational objectives rather than correct appraisal and catharsis.

There seem to be two crucial points of difference in the assumptions that underlie these two positions. Firstly, Peters seems concerned only with the extremes of the affective spectrum, with emotions as a rather violent assault on our precarious rationality, states of visceral disturbance such as those manifest in fear, anger, love and so on. Bantock, by his use of the term 'affect', would seem to widen the discussion to include a wide range of feeling experiences which we would not normally identify as 'emotions'. Perhaps amongst these we could list such states as boredom, fatigue, cheerfulness and varying degrees of human affection for people, animals and objects. Of course we would agree that paralysis by fear is an undesirable assault on our 'passivity', but what are we to make of a philosopher's desire to get things clear? Is that affective state to be appraised away or discharged in a cathartic activity? Presumably not, and once we reach the position of recognizing that certain affective states actually need encouragement and development, then Peters's position seems much less attractive than Bantock's.

The second point of difference underlying these views is involved with the degree of emphasis on 'symbolic forms' of a non-verbal kind; and here we come to music, which Peters seems to relegate to the role of catharsis or 'discharge of passivity'. Although he can see that literature and poetry may develop an awareness of the world, the other arts, 'like music, may be creating, as it were, another world to be aware of. The latter would therefore be more like games than science or history.'[3] He finds it difficult to accept that the non-verbal arts have what he calls a 'cognitive content', that they might carry a *meaning* which would modify the way in which we view the world or provide a perspective on life outside of the particular art experience. Bantock's position here is much closer to Suzanne Langer's, in that he can accept that affective states can be somehow presented and communicated through symbolic forms, even those that do not operate in a verbal medium.

This is really important, especially with regard to music in education.

Apart from rather general and often contradictory descriptions of what music might 'mean' in terms of mood or atmosphere, how can we demonstrate that music communicates or presents specific concepts of any kind that have relationship with 'life' in a wider context? Answers to this kind of question must lie in empirical work rather than in philosophical analysis and speculation, and there is in point of fact enough evidence available to show that music can communicate concepts which can be identified even by children at the age of seven.[4] Furthermore these concepts are closely related in an analogous way to affective states. In fairly crude terms, a small change of pitch or speed in a musical context produces a clear description as to particular qualities, such as degrees of activity, flexibility, weight, size and spacial direction. These correlate strongly with the discerned affective quality. For example, if the music is seen as more active, light, flexible and outgoing, it is also seen as communicating a degree of 'happiness' rather than 'sadness', and *vice versa*. We could even describe the particular affective states we know roughly as 'happiness' as being made up of certain physical sensations experienced as weight, activity, and so on. We certainly speak of being as 'light as air', 'weighed down with care' and 'stiff with sorrow'. No more of this can be said in this present context, but we ought at least to recognize that music can be a very precise vehicle for communicating concepts, that it can in fact be 'meaningful' in terms which have reference to the world beyond itself.

On this kind of level then, we are obliged to recognize a form of 'meaning' in music; but there is another and a more difficult use of the word 'meaning' to be taken into account. Because of his concern to see art works as unique objects of which we have new and individual feeling experiences, L. A. Reid deploys the phrase 'embodied meaning'.[5] This 'meaning' is inseparable from the experience of any particular person who is enjoying the work; it is a private and utterly personal matter. Now while this may be a much needed corrective to some theories of art as communication, yet we are still back with the difficulty that anything which can be said to have meaning for only one individual, in private as it were, is normally regarded as 'meaningless'. 'Meaning' usually indicates a shared, public experience; we ask each other 'What does it mean?' and we expect some kind of enlightenment if only of a provisional nature. Moreover 'meaning' is there to be understood more or less regardless of how we respond to it and to say that art works have 'meaning' is to imply that there is a particular and distinctive quality or utterance located in them which some may recognize and some may not.

Perhaps we can better appreciate the issues involved here by working

from Reid's own analogy. We are to imagine a man throwing things about. Reid suggests that we should not say: 'When he throws things about his movements "mean" that he has certain feelings'. We just 'see him as angry'. But that there is meaning in his actions is surely not questionable After all, it is possible to mistake the meaning; he might be throwing things about because he is overjoyed by sudden good news or because he is testing the strength of his furniture. We 'read' the signs of his actions along with his manner and within the total situation. That is what his behaviour means *to* us. What it means *for* us is quite a different matter; we may recognize the gestures of anger but may 'see him' as pathetic, mistaken, funny or frightening, depending on our relationship with him. Reid is quite right when he says that a similar relationship of work to individual is central to the aesthetic experience, but we must not ignore the importance of the preliminary recognition and appraisal of the situation that has to precede such a relationship. In the case of music we have to learn to recognize the tonally presented conceptual schemata, the play of such variables as weight, stiffness, size and movement, before any unique and personal 'meaning' can be brought about that relates in any positive way with the intentions of composer or performer.

But what kind of 'meaning' might be present in the new and individual feeling-experience of which Reid speaks? Given that the first level of meaning is taken, that the concepts relating to states of human feeling are grasped, how is brought about what Gurney called an 'emotional excitement of a very intense kind', which seems to relate to Reid's unique feeling-experience?[6] It seems unlikely that the answer lies completely in theories of arousal and inhibition of expectation, as Meyer and others suggest, if only for the reason that aesthetic experience of this intense kind seems to be of a different affective quality from other experiences where expectations are inhibited.[7] For example, the experience we have when looking at a painting or seeing a play or listening to a symphony seems to belong to a quite different category from what we feel on not being allowed to board a train we very much want to catch. It would seem more likely that prediction, expectation and its inhibition or resolution are part of the mechanism of engagement with artistic products; how we are kept interested and involved, how we are brought into action with prediction, speculation and ideas about what is happening in the work and what is likely to happen. There is excitement in this, of course, but I would maintain that it is not the prime source of an intense aesthetic experience. To press Reid's position a little further, the highest peaks of aesthetic response would seem to be reached when a work relates strongly to our own individual past experience and fuses together for us a number of

different aspects of feeling. This fusing together of previously separate experiences is called by Koestler 'bisociation'.[8] It is a 'eureka' experience, what Langer calls the 'triumph of insight', what Clive Bell called the 'aesthetic emotion', Gurney an 'emotional excitement of a very intense kind', and Reid a new and individual 'feeling-experience'. It is, in a sense, an unreal experience made from traces of reality: it is the old seen in new ways, and the revelatory element is responsible for the high excitement that characterises the encounter of an individual with an aesthetic object.

The question remains whether we can attach the word 'meaning' or even the term 'embodied meaning' to such a category of experience, a description of which nearly always hovers perilously on the edge of the mystical. I would not wish to press this in the present context but would prefer to point out that the term 'emotion' has come to take on three distinct uses during the course of this discussion, even if we agree to accept the extension of the concept to include less visceral affective experiences.

(1) Emotion as an affective experience as part of a response to a particular situation.
(2) 'Emotions' as they may be presented in music on what we have called the first level of meaning.
(3) Emotion that is experienced as a direct result of an aesthetic situation.

It is emotion in the first usage that is the concern of Peters when he conceives of the non-verbal arts as assisting in the 'discharge of passivity'. He is not able to indicate how the arts might be said to present or articulate feelings or 'emotions' on the second definition though he does allow that in some way or other they might be symbolic forms. As to the third concept, he seems to suggest that far from being responsible for stirring up an emotional state the arts *relieve* us of affective burdens; they discharge rather than excite.

Bantock on the other hand concerns himself more with the second usage, as does Langer, in that he draws attention to the 'emotions' that are presented to us in symbolic forms and which for him pattern ways of affective response to life experiences. Both writers seem to ignore or minimize the third usage, which, if taken into account, allows that people seek out aesthetic experiences and find them pleasurable and positively exciting as opposed to being merely an emotional escape valve or a model of affective behaviour. Reid at least attempts to deal with this positive aspect.

Musicians and music-lovers, while often seeming to be aware of all three uses of the term 'emotion', sometimes tend to confuse them together

when describing their responses to music. One of the more extreme positions taken up in recent years might possibly be the result of such a confusion. I am thinking of Deryck Cooke's statement that the listener's 'capacity for grief' is aroused by the slow movement of Beethoven's *Eroica* symphony.[9] Music for him 'conveys the naked feeling direct'. Perhaps such a view arises in this kind of way. We know something of the emotion we call grief (first usage). We recognize in this music the dull, heavy stiffness of grief tinged with 'heroic' qualities (second usage). We experience a profound emotion (third usage). We experience the 'naked feeling' of grief. This, of course, just does not follow and would be a confusion of the three types of experience. Nevertheless it may be true that we do experience this 'naked feeling'; but it seems most unlikely, if only because we seek out encounters with this movement but real grief we try to avoid.

In the light of this discussion I would suggest that 'emotions' in life and 'emotions' in music *resemble* one another. Their pattern of tensions and resolutions, their structure, is abstracted from many different actual experiences and in music we are aware of the *appearances* of affective states. The powerful emotional responses to music arise precisely because an abstraction is made for us which allows us to experience affectively a fusion of traces of past experiences. Because patterns and structures of feeling are abstracted from local contexts and built up into a unified work, we are obliged to say that we are also offered a perspective. The composer has a point of view, as does the painter, and we are invited to look at life in this way or in that.

To be helped towards particular perspectives on our affective conditions is surely an educative process. But here we become aware of the ineptitude of the phrase 'education of the emotions'. It is *people* who are educated, not emotions, as if emotions could be somehow influenced without reference to cognitive processes and particular human situations. We are helped to structure and understand modes of feeling by the charting and abstracting of affectivity by artists and musicians. The arts resound with ideas about the human situation and offer us insight into, and extensions of, our ways of feeling.

I have tried to show that music has a precise public 'meaning' on one level, and a profound 'meaning' for individuals on a second level, and I would argue that in identifying, clarifying and structuring feeling, music straddles the affective and cognitive areas of human experience. Music is one mode of understanding the world and our experience of it: it is *a way of knowing* the affective, and is therefore education in the most rigorous sense of the word.

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AN INSTITUTIONAL THEORY OF ART[1]

William L. Blizek

PROFESSOR GEORGE DICKIE has presented recently the bare skeleton of an institutional theory of art.[2] His aim is to show that works of art can be defined in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions without having those conditions foreclose on creativity in the arts.[3] To accomplish this aim Dickie offers the following definition: 'A work of art in the classificatory sense is (1) an artifact (2) upon which some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain social institution (the artworld) has conferred the status of candidate for appreciation.'[4] The goal of Dickie's theory is certainly an admirable one—expanding the scope of art without making it subjective—yet, there are several aspects of the theory that raise important questions. Since Dickie has offered only the skeleton of a theory it would be unfair to attack his account, but an examination of those aspects of the theory which appear to be problematic will facilitate a preliminary evaluation and may contribute to the further development of the theory. If Dickie is successful in achieving his goal, or if his theory can be modified so as to accomplish that objective, he will have made a significant contribution to art and the theory of art.

I

One problematic aspect of Dickie's theory is the nature of the artworld. Who is to count as a representative of the artworld; who is eligible to confer the status of candidate for appreciation? Can anyone claim membership in the artworld or is membership limited by the rules of the institution? Dickie contends that 'every person who sees himself as a member of the artworld is an 'officer' of it and is thereby capable of conferring status in its name'.[5] But this position seems to involve several difficulties. (a) It will be very difficult to determine which objects in the world are works of art if *anyone* who 'sees himself as a member of the artworld' can transform *any* object into a work of art simply by treating it as a candidate

for appreciation. We simply would not know whether most of the objects we encounter had been so treated. It certainly would be more difficult to determine what is art in this case than if the membership of the artworld were limited to an easily identifiable group of persons. Works of art would become a matter of private rather than public concern and the role of art in the culture would certainly be diminished. (b) Many objects which are not generally considered to be works of art might be included in the realm of art simply because someone had at one time or another conferred upon them the requisite status. When my wife asks me whether I like her new dress, or when my neighbour paints his house, or when I present myself to the public either bearded or clean shaven, something is being offered as a candidate for appreciation. Yet we do not usually see new dresses or painted houses or people as works of art.[6] Dickie might argue that when someone presents something as a candiate for appreciation they must see themselves as acting on behalf of the artworld before what is presented becomes a work of art. But my wife, my neighbour and I may see ourselves as 'designers' and 'design as art'. In this case we see ourselves as acting on behalf of the artworld and the dress, the house and my face would become works of art. (c) If membership in the artworld is extended to everyone who 'sees himself as a member', the membership of the artworld may approximate the membership of society. In this case there is no need to introduce a special institution (the artworld); rather art can be determined by the members of society at large.[7] While Dickie contends that the artworld 'carries on its business at the level of customary practice' he also contends that such practice 'defines a social institution'.[8] When membership in the artworld is open to anyone who sees himself as a member the customary practice is likely to be diffuse and the institution it defines ambiguous.

Moving in the other direction, towards limited membership in the artworld, also raises difficulties. Imagine, for example, that membership in the artworld is limited to five hundred of the world's leading artists, fifty of the world's wealthiest collectors or patrons, and the directors of one hundred of the most famous museums, galleries and concert halls.[9] In this case the realm of art may be severely limited by the tastes and interests of this select group, the 'official' artworld. Such limitations are contrary to the goal of Dickie's theory, which is to provide greater freedom and creativity in art. Yet the above model would appear to be closer to what Arthur Danto suggests when he claims that 'to see something as art requires something the eye cannot descry—an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of history of art: an artworld'.[10] Danto's artworld would be limited by 'an atmosphere of artistic theory' and 'a

knowledge of history of art', and such limitations would strengthen the institutional character of the artworld. Dickie wants a clearly defined institution (in which case art is recognizable and public) and an open door for creativity. It appears, however, that moving towards one aspect of his theory means moving away from the other. If a compromise is effected his theory will not have the full advantages of either pole, and those are the advantages which give the theory its initial attractiveness.[11]

Another question regarding the concept of an artworld arises in virtue of the various art forms: that is, is there a music artworld, a visual artworld, a theatrical artworld, and so on? It does appear that there are such artworlds, each characterized by its own professional association, official publications and pattern of activities.[12] If we conceive of the artworld as an informal social institution that is sociologically determinable and publicly recognizable, then Dickie may have developed several theories of art—an institutional theory of music, an institutional theory of drama, an institutional theory of literature, and so on. But what is the relation of one artworld to another? Can there be a conflict between the various artworlds? Which artworld is to have priority? What power, for example, does the literary artworld have over the theatrical artworld? If a clearly defined institution is required, then it would be possible to have several artworlds which might conflict. If a general artworld is acceptable, however, the nature of that artworld and subsequently what is art may be so amorphous as to lose its significance.

II

The concept of conferring the status of candidate for appreciation is a second problematic aspect of Dickie's theory.[13] The problem centres around the possibility of retracting conferred status. In the customary practices of the artworld it appears that the retraction of status is possible. 'The innovative young artist submits an unusual piece of sculpture and it is rejected by the selection committee of the museum on the grounds that it is not really art.' This seems to be a commonplace occurrence in the artworld—young artists are always being rejected. It is sometimes the case that works are rejected because they are of what is judged to be inferior quality; but they are also rejected, especially in the case of something new, because they are not works of art. If the artworld can retract the status conferred by a single individual, then it can limit severely the range of art and foreclose on the conditions for creativity in the arts.

Dickie, I suspect, would be anxious to deny the power to retract the status conferred by a single individual. It is this very problem—the power

of an artworld 'elite' or 'establishment'—that encourages Dickie to argue that 'the status in question may be acquired by *a single person's treating an artifact as a candidate for appreciation*'.[14] As well, Dickie contends that no *mistake* can be made in conferring status and this suggests that status conferred is status secured.[15] But these arguments seem contrary to the practices of the artworld and they suggest an artworld that is so vague that its impact on any culture would be unimportant.

Another question about retracting conferred status concerns the possibility of a revolution in the artworld. Is it possible that all of the things we now take to be works of art could be expelled from the realm of art and only broken bottles and used tires included? Or, for example, could we expel all of Shakespeare's writings? What seems clear from these examples is that the kind of interest shown in what are generally considered works of art would not subside simply because we no longer applied the term 'art' to that class of objects. We would still read Shakespeare, even if it could be demonstrated that his writings did not belong to the realm of art. Our continued interest in what is no longer art suggests that there are guidelines for deciding what is art and what is not art that are not themselves subject to arbitrary decisions in the artworld. Such guidelines need to be described in a complete theory of art.

A final question about conferring status concerns the nature of artistic activity. Dickie contends that the paintings of monkeys are works of art when they are displayed in an art museum (because someone representing the artworld—the curator of the museum—has conferred upon them the status of candidate for appreciation), but are not art when displayed by the zoo keeper.[16] Similarly when Duchamp enters a wine rack in a show it is a work of art. In the latter case it is Duchamp who is the artist—because he was creative enough to imagine this ready-made as a candidate for appreciation. In the former case, then, the curator of the museum would be the artist. But there is certainly something odd about saying that the curator of the museum is an artist. The problem is more serious if membership in the artworld is limited. Suppose a struggling young painter (not yet a member of the artworld) submitted one of his paintings to the curator of the museum. If accepted, this painting would be the work of the curator and not the painter. For Dickie, artistic activity is equivalent to conferring status and this seems to eliminate much from the realm of artistic activity that would ordinarily be included in that realm. We have, then, a form of activity which is no longer considered artistic, but one again in which we are no less interested for that.

III

The concept of appreciation is another important but problematic element of Dickie's theory. By 'appreciation' Dickie means 'something like "in experiencing the qualities of a thing one finds them worthy or valuable".'[17] But there is nothing here to limit value or worth to aesthetic value or aesthetic worth. In fact Dickie admits that 'this meaning applies quite generally both inside and outside the domain of art'.[18] Thus every can of beans on the supermarket shelf is a candidate for appreciation—and so is my wife's new dress, my neighbour's house and every individual who considers his own appearance. Suppose, for example, that an accepted art critic claims that the diary of artist X is worthy or valuable because it helps us understand the symbolism of X's painting. Here is a case in which a member of the artworld, acting on behalf of the artworld, confers the status of candidate for appreciation upon the diary of X.[19] Does the diary become a work of art? Is there not a difference between saying that the diary is valuable and is therefore art, and saying that the diary is valuable because it provides certain information? I do not see that there is anything in Dickie's theory by which to distinguish between appreciation in the case of art and appreciation in general.[20] If there is not, then the realm of art will include my wife's dress, the can of beans on the supermarket shelf, the artist's diary, and so on. Dickie might contend that appreciation in art is not different from appreciation in general, as the quotation above suggests, but that what distinguishes the painting which is art from the diary which is not is that the status (candidate for appreciation) is conferred by someone 'acting on behalf of the artworld'. This solution, however, raises several difficulties. (a) 'Acting on behalf of the artworld' is dependent to some extent upon the problems mentioned above; namely, who is a member of the artworld? (b) The case of the critic and the diary suggests that someone can act on behalf of the artworld and yet generate unusual works of art. It is not just that unusual objects become works of art, given Dickie's theory—the diary might well be an important piece of literature or the urinal might be a kind of sculpture, and that is the advantage of Dickie's theory—but it is the reason for their becoming art that is perplexing—*e.g.* because the diary gives insight into X's paintings. (c) If one rejects the contention that the critic above is acting on behalf of the artworld, an artworld which defines 'acting on behalf of' is one that is itself more narrowly defined than one in which anyone can be a member who sees himself as a member. The more narrowly the artworld is defined, the more likely it is that the range of art will be limited. I do not know how Dickie would respond to this

criticism—that the concept of appreciation does not seem to place any limits on art—but Dickie must account for this problem in the fully developed theory.

IV

Finally, one purpose of the theory is to show that artifactuality is a necessary condition of art. Dickie argues that artifactuality is a necesssary condition for art because it is a necessary condition for creativity and creativity is the key to expanding the scope and variety of art. Weitz argues that to define art by specifying necessary conditions 'is ludicrous since it forecloses on the very conditions of creativity in the arts'.[21] Dickie responds by asking: 'How could there be an instance of creativity without an artifact of some kind being produced?'[22] He concludes, of course, that there can be no creativity without artifactuality and he accepts artifactuality because creativity is so important to the enrichment of art.[23] But Dickie is willing to allow natural objects to become works of art. To make this possible he contends that artifactuality can be *conferred upon* natural objects rather than *worked on* them.[24] Natural objects can become artifactualized without the use of tools; *e.g.* when someone retrieves a piece of driftwood and uses it as a centrepiece. The conferrability of artifactuality serves to enlarge the scope of art by admitting found objects.

Two questions arise concerning Dickie's account of artifactuality as a necessary condition for art. First, is the creativity of someone who writes a novel or performs a concerto equivalent to the creativity of someone who notices certain qualities of a piece of driftwood? If there are two concepts of creativity (one related to productivity, the other to recognition) then artifactualizing natural objects is either unnecessary or impossible. That is, if the recognition of certain qualities of natural objects is itself a creative act, then artifactuality is not a necessary condition for creativity; and if creativity implies production, then it cannot be applied to natural objects. I take it that Dickie means by 'creativity' the creativity of production because he asks: 'How could there be an instance of creativity without an artifact of some kind being produced?'[25]

The second question is whether the concept of artifactuality which is applicable in the case of a man-made object is equivalent to the concept which is applicable to a 'man-handled' or 'man-noticed' object? If there are two concepts of artifactuality, Dickie may be unable to respond to Weitz as he seeks to do.[26] It is no rebuttal to introduce a new concept of artifactuality and then claim that a work of art is an artifact in this new sense when Weitz is utilizing some other sense of artifactuality. It appears,

however, that there are two senses of artifactuality. When someone takes a piece of driftwood home he artifactualizes it and it becomes art; but when he simply notices the driftwood he does not artifactualize it and it does not become art. But there is a difference between simply noticing the piece of driftwood and calling the attention of others to it even if it remains untouched by human hand.

One sense of artifactuality, then, applies to production, but another applies to the process of publicizing an object. The second sense of artifactuality is something like 'making something an object of public attention'.[27] Although Dickie does not distinguish two senses of artifactuality and his own statements suggest that artifactuality applies to production, the problem with which he deals suggests the sense of artifactuality that applies to public objects and I believe this second sense of artifactuality may contribute to his theory. Dickie may not be able to respond adequately to Weitz (if Weitz means by 'artifact' man-made object), but he may suggest a solution to some of the problems of his theory.

V

Professor Dickie's institutional theory of art is a tantalizing one. It holds out the prospect of defining art in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions and, at the same time, expanding the scope of art. Now Dickie does offer two conditions which are necessary and sufficient for something's being a work of art—artifactuality and the status of candidate for appreciation—and if these conditions are accepted, anything may become a work of art. There are, however, two significant difficulties which need to be dealt with, given Dickie's rudimentary account of the theory. First, Dickie offers no justification for the necessity of artifactuality as a condition for art. He claims that upon reflection we 'realize' that a work of art is an artifact and he contends that artifactuality is a prerequisite for creativity. Both of these claims require supporting argument. Second, the social property of art (the status of candidate for appreciation) does not seem to place any limits on art. While the scope of art is expanded, it may be expanded beyond recognition and beyond significance.

To overcome these difficulties Dickie might show that artifactuality serves as the limiting condition.[28] If an artifact is an object of public attention, this would serve as a social condition governing the conferment of status. Dickie suggests that something's hanging in a museum is good evidence for its having had the requisite status conferred upon it.[29] So hanging might also be good evidence for its being an artifact, *i.e.* a public object. We can artifactualize natural objects by displaying them, as when

we make the driftwood a centrepiece. But we can also display natural objects by making paths to them and informing people of their whereabouts, *e.g.* the Old Faithful geyser of Yellowstone National Park. What I am suggesting is that artifactuality be seen as a social property as well as status of candidate for appreciation. The result will be that art will remain in the public domain. By accepting artifactuality as the limiting condition of art we are given a reason for including artifactuality and the scope of art, while remaining open, will also be recognizable. My suggestion is contrary to Dickie's contention that 'many works of art are never seen by anyone but the persons who create them, but they are still works of art', but I believe that the price to be paid for that degree of flexibility is excessive.[30] There does remain, however, the case of the zoo keeper who sees himself as a member of the artworld. The elephant is a work of art, then, because it has been artifactualized and because it is offered as a candidate for appreciation by someone representing the artworld. To avoid this case, Dickie must define more precisely 'acting on behalf of' or 'appreciation', and attend to the hazards which accompany such definitions.

REFERENCE NOTES

[1] This paper was originally presented to the 8th National Conference of the British Society of Aesthetics, London, September 22, 1973. I am indebted to the members of the British Society for their comments and criticism, and to Professors Jerry Cederblom, Michael Gillespie, and David Paulsen for their helpful suggestions. The writing of this paper was supported by a grant from the University Senate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

[2] Professor Dickie first presented his theory in an article, 'Defining art', *American Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 6, no. 3 (July 1969), pp. 253–6. He presents a slightly modified version of the theory in his recently published book, *Aesthetics: An Introduction* (1971), Chapter XI.

[3] So defining art is in response to those who claim that art cannot be defined in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. For examples see: William Kennick, 'Does Traditional Aesthetics Rest on a Mistake', *Mind*, vol. 67 (1958), pp. 317–34; Morris Weitz, 'The Role of Theory in Aesthetics', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 15, no. 1 (September 1956), pp. 27–35; and Paul Ziff, 'The Task of Defining a Work of Art', *The Philosophical Review*, vol. LXII, no. 1 (January 1953), pp. 58–78.

[4] Dickie, *Aesthetics: An Introduction*, p. 101.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

[6] The strength of arguments (a) and (b) depends in part upon the concept of appreciation. See my discussion of appreciation later in this paper.

[7] There is some hint that this may have been Dickie's original intention. In 'Defining Art' Dickie defines art as '(1) an artifact (2) upon which some *society or some sub-group of a society* has conferred the status of candidate for appreciation' (p. 254). For the italicized words in the above definition Dickie has substituted 'person or persons acting

on behalf of a certain social institution (the artworld)' in *Aesthetics: An Introduction.*

[8] *Aesthetics: An Introduction*, pp. 103–4.

[9] This hypothetical case is an extrapolation of the sociological account of Chicago's Artworld presented by Edward M. Levine, 'Chicago's Art World', *Urban Life and Culture*, vol. 1, no. 3 (October 1972), pp. 292–322.

[10] Arthur Danto, 'The Artworld', *The Journal of Philosophy*, vol. LXI, no. 19 (October 15 1964), pp. 571–84.

[11] For a discussion of other problems of membership in the artworld see Ted Cohen, 'The Possibility of Art: Remarks on a Proposal by Dickie', *The Philosophical Review*, vol. LXXXII, no. 1 (January 1973), pp. 69–82.

[12] For example, The American Educational Theater Association, The American Ceramic Society, The American Musicological Society, and *Dance Perspectives, Art Journal, The Musical Quarterly, Theater Quarterly.*

[13] For an account of conferring status in terms of illocutions and perlocutions see Ted Cohen's 'The Possibility of Art: Remarks on a Proposal by Dickie'.

[14] *Aesthetics: An Introduction*, p. 103.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 108. Dickie does suggest that a mistake can be made *by* conferring status, that is by conferring the status of candidate for appreciation on an object that no one actually does appreciate.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 106.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

[19] If something is actually appreciated I take it that it is also a candidate for appreciation. I do not believe that something can be appreciated but not be a candidate for appreciation.

[20] Cohen asks what qualifies a thing to receive the requisite status. This question puts its finger on the problem, but suggests that the answer will be in terms of natural properties. See Cohen, p. 72.

[21] Weitz, p. 32.

[22] *Aesthetics: An Introduction*, p. 107.

[23] Weitz also argues against artifactuality as a necessary condition for art on the basis of the 'actual employment of the concept of art' (p. 30). We sometimes refer to natural objects as works of art; therefore some non-artifacts (natural objects) are works of art and artifactuality cannot be a necessary condition of art. Dickie argues in reply that when we refer to natural objects as works of art we do not mean to classify those objects, but rather to express our approval of them. Weitz has confused, he contends, the evaluative and classificatory senses of art.

[24] *Aesthetics: An Introduction*, p. 106.

[25] *Aesthetics: An Introduction*, p. 107. He also suggests that the driftwood noticed, but 'untouched by human hand', is not a work of art and not an artifact (pp. 105–6).

[26] Dickie's argument for artifactuality is: 'And surely when we do so reflect, we realize that *part* of what is meant when we think of or assert of something (not in praise) that it is a work of art is that it is an artifact' (*ibid.*, p. 100). This, it seems, is a very weak argument for artifactuality.

[27] The number of people needed to comprise a public is questionable.

[28] This was suggested by Professor David Paulsen.

[29] *Aesthetics: An Introduction*, p. 102.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 103.

BEYOND APPRECIATION*

Philip Meeson

> The drawn line is the record of a gesture, and that gesture is modified by the artist's feeling which is thus communicated to us directly.—Roger Fry.[1]

To SAY that someone can draw implies that he can draw something; it also implies that he has a skill which enables him to draw not only one object but a range of objects of quite diverse appearance. Further, whether someone can draw is readily put to the test, for if he makes a drawing which is unrecognizable as a drawing of any known object or which fails to represent adequately the appearance of the object which the drawing purports to represent, then his ability to draw is easily questioned. Drawings, of course, need not represent anything at all, but in order to accept the claim that a person who makes drawings which do not represent anything can draw we would have to use a different standard of judgement, different evaluative criteria than the usual criteria which are founded upon representational accuracy, in order to decide whether such a claim should stand. The distinction here is between the claim 'X can draw' and the acceptance of a linear configuration as a drawing. In the first instance we would need to make a range of judgements involving assessments of skill, accuracy and so forth; in the second we would need to do no more than assign the category 'drawing' to the observed configuration. If, now, someone were to claim that he was an artist and be asked to prove this claim by drawing, would we expect to notice a difference between the drawings of the artist and the drawings of the person who claims simply to be able to draw?

That there is a distinction between a drawing in the simplest interpretation of that term and a work of art may be demonstrated by examining the different expectations we bring to each, expectations deriving very largely from the context in which drawings as distinct from works of art are found. Whether we correctly assign our drawing or our work of art to the appropriate category is not, however, the most important point.

* Paper delivered to The British Society of Aesthetics, December 1973.

What matters more is whether we distinguish between the two categories and the basis upon which we arrive at this distinction.

This is not a matter of simply noting perceptual differences between the two categories. A work of art as distinct from a simple drawing need not necessarily contain more information than a drawing nor does it, as a configuration, notably differ from the class of simple drawings (i.e. drawings made without any overt artistic intention). The important point of distinction lies in the use that the drawing encourages us to make of it. If this use is limited only to the making of referential links based upon perceived similarities between a configuration and an object which it is meant to represent or to the use of the configuration simply as evidence of conscious activity (as might be the case in a scientific study), then we would be right to question its value as a work of art or to question these uses of the drawing as being relevant to artistic appreciation. Only if the drawing were actively to stimulate the engagement with it of the imaginative attitude over the merely perceptual attitude could we reasonably claim, leaving aside for the moment the particular question of any aesthetic qualities it may fortuitously possess, that it was a work of art. Whether or not the observer himself brings the imaginative attitude to bear upon a drawing is not in itself a deciding factor here. Engineer's drawings of old steam engines, for example, are often excellent drawings but they are not, for they could not have been intended to be, works of art whatever nostalgic attachments we may be able to make with them. In the case of such drawings it was not the draughtsman's intention simply to stimulate an imaginative train of thought in the mind of the observer but to offer information upon the necessary technical means required to make a real object. This is not the same as making a sketch prior to completing a finished work of art for a work of art only achieves completion in the imagination of the observer, where it exists as an unreal or fictional object. Precise measurements necessary in an engineer's drawing would be damaging rather than helpful to the formation of such an imaginative structure for they would deny the essential requirement of the artistic use of the imagination that it should not be constrained by the limitations of physical reality.

2

I make these preliminary remarks in order to suggest that learning to draw need not necessarily entail any contact with art, unless the term 'art' is to be used simply as a synonym for skill, and that in representing an object by drawing there need not be any engagement of the imagination in the process. One can make an object to represent another object

without the imagination intruding into the activity in any way at all. Indeed, if all that is intended is representational verisimilitude, it is better that the imagination be entirely excluded.

The difference, therefore, between a drawing which is made simply to represent (in the sense of portray) an object in nature or a drawing which is made to convey information about how a real object may be constructed (as in the case of the engineer's drawing) and a drawing which is made as a work of art depends upon the degree to which the drawing excites the free imaginative participation of the observer. The engineer's drawing is an analogue of a real or potentially real object which is governed by the constraints of physical reality. The artist's drawing, by contrast, is an analogue of an unreal object not so constrained by physical reality.

To learn to draw artistically requires that the world of the imagination should not be allowed to be dictated to by the world of physical reality. It is not sufficient in art to make a drawing which accurately describes what the eye sees; the drawing must also convey unseen aspects of reality which can only be expressed symbolically or by analogy. To suggest the weight of an object, for example, the artist must convey the feeling of weight by his use of gestural signs suggestive of weight. Likewise, to convey tactile sensations of smoothness, roughness, etc., the artist must invent gestural analogies for these sensations. If he attempts to imitate textures so accurately that the eye is deceived into taking the imitation to be the real thing, the possibility of the creation of an imaginative structure is subverted and a purely perceptual interest in reality takes over. Such imitation is allowable if the artist makes it clear that no deception is intended by introducing obvious incongruities into his drawing or by deliberately preventing the observer from connecting it with the perceived world of nature. A mere model of reality, as wax-works figures show, excites little interest for it demands only that we should assign to it its proper referent. Once this is done all that remains for us to ponder is how the maker's skill has been employed either to deceive the eye (very rarely, however, is complete deception achieved; where this happens, as in a wax-works, it is usually the result of mistaking an onlooker or an attendant for one of the exhibits) or to suggest on a small scale objects familiar to us in the real world.

3

Since the Renaissance various methods have been used by teachers of art and artists assuming the role of teacher to direct the student away from the lure of representational accuracy for its own sake. This became

necessary when art began to concern itself with observable and measurable reality in order to enhance the credibility of the religious stories which artists were called upon to illustrate. Through their search for a means to make their pictures more realistic artists of the fifteenth century in Italy were confronted by a dilemma. If they were not to descend to the level of slavish imitators of reality (mere copiers of a copy, in Plato's words), they had to construct reality in new ways; they could not rest content with things as they are but must show them as they might be. But if there was a limit to the extent to which an artist could accept the constraints of verisimilitude either to past models or to the demands of reality, there was also clearly a limit to the extent to which the well known events in the Christian story could be re-arranged.

The solution to this dilemma lay in the adoption by the artist of a set of rules which ensured that the final test of excellence in art could never be mere accuracy whether to traditional models or to mundane reality. These rules or canons were not, of course, in any sense scientific; they were not derived from empirical examination or analysis of the natural world but arose from the imaginative world of beauty, harmony, order, balance and unity. No appeal to the perceived world could therefore be made either to substantiate or to justify them. True empirical investigation of nature would quickly reveal deeper organisational structures than these secondary aesthetic ones.

Confronted by a demand for greater realism the fifteenth-century artist invented an alternative to the real world in order to preserve the distinction, vital in art, between the real and the imaginary. Direct observation of nature, a familiar part of artistic procedure from Alberti onwards, needs to be seen as a corrective to the danger of a merely private indulgence in phantasy not as the abandonment altogether of imagination. So long as artists could sustain their belief in the imaginative structure of classical proportion and in the Platonic structure of orders of beauty dependent upon a single canon, the potential danger to art implicit within a shift of emphasis during the fifteenth century from the imaginative over to the perceptual attitude could be overlooked and the debt which art would ultimately have to pay for this dalliance with the real put into abeyance until some future date.

In his *Treatise on Painting*, for example, Alberti directs the artist not to look at nature indiscriminately but to select from nature her most beautiful examples, by which he clearly means her most well-formed examples.

> The student of painting should be attentive not only to the likeness of things but also and especially to beauty, for in painting beauty is as pleasing as it is necessary. The early painter Demetrius failed to obtain the highest praise because he was more

> devoted to representing the likeness of things then to beauty. Therefore, excellent parts should be selected from the most beautiful bodies, and every effort should be made to perceive, understand and express beauty . . . to painters with no model before them to follow, who strive by the light of their own talent alone to capture the qualities of beauty, it easily happens that they do not by their own efforts achieve the beauty they seek or ought to create.[2]

This theme is taken up again and again by successive writers until the nineteenth century, by which time alternative models had so proliferated that the idea of beauty as a single canon of proportion could no longer be sustained.

Academic practice as it developed after the fifteenth century went to great pains to ensure that students would not encounter nature directly until they had absorbed the rules of proportion together with the technical and mannerist devices of classical academic drawing. Progress from the student's first laboured attempts to copy the master's drawing to his final direct confrontation with nature was slow and demanding and throughout this often painful period of apprenticeship, whilst the student's knowledge of nature might not extend far beyond the human figure, his knowledge of art, his knowledge that is of how to reconstruct through drawing the imaginative forms which comprised in essence the European tradition of painting and sculpture, would be considerably enlarged.

Drawing books in which often only faint glimpses of the academic method can be traced are not able to convey the complete vocabulary of formal devices which a student would become familiar with through studio practice for only in the studio between the master and pupil surrounded by the evocative fragments of the classical dream and the impedimenta of the workshop—drawings, casts, diagrams—would the deeper symbolic significance of these artifacts become apparent to the student. Inert forms would inspire a sudden quickening of the imagination and drawn into a student's immediate concern with a problem of anatomy perhaps or of proportion or technique inanimate pieces of plaster or stone would become the living embodiments of an artistic creed.

Undoubtedly by the nineteenth century this dream was rapidly fading and fewer artists were willing to make the imaginative leap necessary to breathe life back into these old forms. Drawings which previously had taken reality only as their starting point now risked being compared with observed fact and discarded as being either inaccurate or eccentric. Such criticism of academic drawing, however, was often disingenuous and reflected a lack of understanding both about its expressive content, which originated only in part from perceptual sources, and about the dependence of artistic expression in general upon *history and tradition.*

Ruskin wrote in defence of the Pre-Raphaelites, for example:

> Pre-Raphaelitism has but one principle, that of absolute, uncompromising truth in all it does, obtained by working down to the most minute detail, from nature, and from nature only. Every Pre-Raphaelite landscape background is painted to the last touch, in the open air, from the thing itself. Every Pre-Raphaelite figure, however studied in expression, is a true portrait of some living person. Every minute accessory is painted in the same manner.[3]

He contrasted the Pre-Raphaelite's absolute, uncompromising truth with the pathetic failings of

> . . . poor Wilkie [who] must needs travels to see the grand school, and imitate the grand school, and ruin himself. And . . . multitudes of other painters ruined from the beginning by that grand school. . . . Etty, naturally as good a painter who ever lived, but no one told him what to paint, and he studied the antique, and the grand schools, and painted dances of nymphs in red and yellow shawls to the end of his days. . . . He is gone to the grave, a lost mind. . . . Flaxman, another naturally great man, with as true an eye for nature as Raphael—he stumbles over the blocks of the antique statues—wanders in the dark valley of their ruins to the end of his days. . . . Another lost mind.[4]

All these, Ruskin complains, looked backwards into history for their inspiration rather than looking for it in the present. He saw no conflict between his implied criticism here of historicism in art and the obvious dependence of the Pre-Raphaelites on historical subjects, two of which, Holman Hunt's *Claudio and Isabella* and Millais's *Ophelia*, slip by in Ruskin's text without adverse comment.

Ruskin's involvement with the Pre-Raphaelite movement is indeed instructive for it highlights a particular form of misunderstanding between artists and critics which has an important bearing upon the extent to which criticism can be said to have any relevance to the making of works of art. It concerns the nature of imagination in art. Ruskin takes imagination to mean essentially invention. Remarking, in answer to the criticism that the principle of Pre-Raphaelitism seems adverse to all exertion of imaginative power, he questions whether '. . . even the greatest men of old times possessed more exhaustless invention than either Millais or Rossetti'.[5]

The reconstruction in imagination of previously experienced reality is perhaps the most commonly understood meaning of the term 'imagination' in art. However, it must be extended to include the construction of forms which are analogous to experience and which may have no observable connection with the visible appearance of familiar objects about us. The minute detail of a Pre-Raphaelite landscape provides us with no analogies to sensations of space, colour, light, temperature, etc.; its inventiveness lies in its attempt to reconstitute perceptual reality entirely in veridi-

cal terms and it is this aspect of art which because it is founded upon the real can be reduced to data, laws and seemingly scientific formulae which are often thought mistakenly to comprise the essence of artistic imagination.

The imaginative reconstruction of reality 'as it really appeared' reaches its apotheosis in *trompe l'oeil* and the deceptions of the wax-works and has been a recurring theme in art particularly at times of low artistic temperature. But the subordination of artistic imagination to the demands of illusion provides no answer to the demand that an artist should do more than merely construct a model of reality however fascinating and intriguing such models can be. Whether through a distinctive manner of drawing or composition or by an individual method of applying paint or harmonizing colour an artist should display a distinctive personality rising above the level of mere manipulative or constructive skill alone. In short he is required to speak with an individual voice.

At the highest levels of craft skill distinctions are difficult to draw between the superlative craftsman, in wood or metal perhaps, of whom we might say that he is an artist in these materials although his concern is with making real objects like a bowl or a table, and the skilful artist who uses such materials in order to give form to an idea arising out of a felt response to experience. Again, as with the comparison between a drawing which is a work of art and an engineer's drawing, the distinction will turn upon the degree to which the work stimulates in the imagination of the beholder an awakening of feeling towards the work or the objects it depicts rather than simply prompting recognition of something seen or providing constructional information for its fabrication.

In order to lift the artist beyond the narrower demands of craftsmanship some degree of freedom must be allowed him to do more than merely copy or repeat; the fabricated object must not be judged entirely on the grounds of existing reality but must be open to alteration and reformation. At this point artistic invention begins to appear (the invention of new methods for obtaining the same results would not count, of course, as artistic invention) and new constructs will arise through the alteration and adaptation of old models to new purposes. But such inventive adaptation does not on its own fulfill completely the demands of artistic freedom, for it need not embrace new ways of responding to reality but may merely result in a new range of artifacts having only a superficial difference from the old. Nor, indeed, need it take any account of changing reality itself but may simply result in further variations upon traditional models. In order for the full demands of artistic freedom to be realized the artistic imagination must be free to fashion in the imagination whatever

analogical structure is required to stand for or interpret reality. In short, the demands of the work of art as an artifact should not come before an artist's capacity to experience and respond to reality directly, which in turn requires that the expressive potentialities of art should be open to the total bodily response of the artist to the world about him not limited merely to a purely intellectual rearrangement of existing models. Besides veridical and constructive imagination a third category needs, therefore, to be distinguished, that of analogical imagination; that aspect of imagination which reconstructs the experiences arising out of the artist's confrontation with reality through the vehicle of the materials of his art.

4

Looking again at drawing as practised in the academies it is now possible to see how, leaving aside the more superficial swings of fashion, a critic such as Ruskin could misunderstand the fundamental generative origins of academic practice and why also art criticism has tended to stop short at that point where it might begin to deal with the urgent concerns of the artist; for what Ruskin remained largely unaware of was that aspect of academic practice which was directed towards fostering in the artist's imagination analogical structures to essentially non-visual sensations and responses, that area of the imagination, in short, which is concerned with felt rather than perceived reality.

A clue to what this meant in practice can be found in the origins of the academic method itself, which was founded on the study of sculpture. The process of learning to draw followed a standard pattern. The student was directed firstly, as Leonardo da Vinci writes, to 'copy drawings by a good master made by his art from nature and not as exercises; then from a relief keeping by [him] a drawing done from the same relief; then from a good model'.[6] The relief to which Leonardo refers was a cast or in more privileged circumstances an actual piece of sculpture taken for preference from the antique because, as Leonardo states; 'The imitation of the antique is more to be praised than that of the modern.' Alberti had given strong support to this instructional method in his *Treatise on Painting*, where he had advised painters to copy an inferior sculpture rather than a first-rate painting in order to understand the play of light and the methods for capturing its effects. Alberti also suggested that it may be better to practise relief (i.e. modelling) rather than drawing because the three-dimensional nature of sculpture would help the artist to develop a more compehensive grasp of form.

Such methods were designed to develop an understanding of classical

proportion, to enable students to draw figures which looked as though they were in relief and also to develop the student's skill in handling the drawing instrument. But more than this they were designed to implant in his imagination a 'sculptural model' which included certain set responses to feelings of weight, mass, volume and structure.

The significance of this feature of academic instruction cannot be over-emphasized. It was not merely an instructional method which had crept thoughtlessly into academic practice, but marked a central and indispensable element within the whole approach of the painter or sculptor to his art. Sculpture and painting in fifteenth-century Italy were rooted in a common attitude towards drawing. They were not, indeed, thought of as separate arts but simply marked the artistic poles between which both painters and sculptors moved as dictated by the requirements of their commissions. Many records exist which show how readily sculptors could become painters and vice versa. As John Pope-Hennessy has pointed out, the apparent ease with which a painter could turn into a sculptor and a sculptor transform himself into a painter has always been slightly embarrassing to scholars. The really heavy-weight scholars, he remarks, have a simple solution to this problem: they just ignore it. 'Works which lack a third dimension', he writes, '[scholars] say to themselves are paintings, and works which are recessive are sculptures; and if in some unaccountable fashion the two categories merge in something which looks like a painting but must logically be a sculpture, the best thing is to shut one's eyes and pretend that the horrible phenomenon has not occurred'. 'But in the fifteenth century', he continues, 'people took quite a different view. Ghiberti in his *Commentaries* refers to sculpture and painting as *one* art, in the singular. "Design", he says, "is the origin of the art of painting and sculpture." And again, "Sculpture and painting are a science which is the highest invention of all the other arts." For Alberti, in the *Della Pictura*, they are cognate arts, "nourished by one and the same genius, painting as well as sculpture".'[7]

As already remarked, it was not only the system of classical proportion which became etched upon the student's mind, nor the methods for creating an illusion of three-dimensional reality on a two-dimensional surface; what he also learned through his prolonged contact with antique sculpture was how to imbue his drawing with those sensations of space, weight, structure, mass and touch appropriate to 'sculptural feelings'. To guard against his drawing becoming a mere copy of the play of light and shade over the object being drawn the student would be required to express through his drawing an understanding of sculptural form as distinct from two-dimensional or decorative form. In practice what he was re-

quired to do was to create gestural analogies to sensations of mass, weight, and so forth, as he experienced them before the works of sculpture he was set to draw, avoiding paying too close attention to accidental features of light and shade and to the superficial tactile qualities of the materials of the sculpture itself. Sensations of space were expressed through perspective, which was not merely a device for creating an illusion of space but a means for expressing subtle sensations, essentially muscular in origin, of nearness and farness, closeness and distance.

This aspect of drawing, which might be termed the 'performative' aspect, goes beyond the making or reassembling of schemata and is naturally difficult to convey except by direct contact between a teacher and a pupil, a fact which is true of all the performing arts. If it is often overlooked in the arts of drawing and painting, this is because in these arts the artist is his own performer, the performance forming an inseparable part of the original creative act.

There is a limit, of course, to the extent to which artists can bring a freshness of vision to the expression of an idea like that of sculptural form or to which a once urgent artistic idea can inspire new imaginative transformations. Until such time as the imagination reorients itself towards a new grasp of reality art may retreat into invention or novelty or into the mere copying or recording of perceptual reality.

The weakness of Pre-Raphaelite painting and the source of its often embarrassing distance from any direct sensuous response to the physical world lay in its attempt to generate by an effort of will an art out of invention as an alternative to the fading attractions of academic art without any direct or natural feeling for the reality lying beyond the artificial world which so fascinated the Pre-Raphaelite artist. The absence of any bodily or sensusous resonance on the part of the Pre-Raphaelite artist to his invented world is apparent in the affected and stilted mannerisms characteristic of Pre-Raphaelite art as a whole. That it should have been seen by a later generation of artists as the most telling and complete example of arid academicism is indeed paradoxical but nevertheless revealing of the confusion which persisted until comparatively recently over the essential differences between academicism and naturalism.

5

Changes of style in art are not only attributable to changes of emphasis and interest within the perceptual area but can occur also as a result of a shift of emphasis away from the perceptual to the areas of making or of

feeling. None of these attitudes which we can adopt in our interaction with reality about us need bear any *a priori* claims to primacy in art; but within the imaginative realm of art there is a need for guidelines or for sign-posts however temporary or tentative. In order to supply these sign-posts, these havens of firmer ground within the continuous flux of feeling and sensation, artists must localize a particular range of feelings and give them form. This cannot be an entirely cerebral exercise involving the artist's inventive skill alone but must develop out of an awareness, often no more than that, of the inappositeness of existing forms to the artist's own personal experience. Before an artist can localize his own particular feelings, however, he needs to set them within the context of existing artistic models, which will then provide him with a point of departure.

In Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty*, perhaps the best example of an artist attempting to theorize about this process of testing and discrimination, one can observe Hogarth's imagination encircling the range of forms which constituted the essence of his art. Amongst the forms which he designates as beautiful can be discerned the particular formal conventions of the English eighteenth-century Rococo style originating in certain kin-aesthetic and sensori motor responses to spacial dispositions.

Hogarth begins by asking the reader to take note of the inside as well as the outside of surfaces and we may assume that he is not addressing the reader as a mere limp-wristed dilettante but as one able to respond bodily to the experience of three-dimensional space. To make himself better understood he goes on:

> ... let every object under our consideration be imagined to have its inward contents scoop'd out so nicely, as to have nothing in it left but a thin shell, exactly corresponding both in its inner and outer surface, to the shape of the object itself; and let us likewise suppose this thin shell to be made up of very fine threads closely connected together, and equally perceptible, whether the eye is supposed to observe them from without or within; and we shall find the ideas of the two surfaces of this shell will naturally coincide. The very word, shell, makes us seem to see both surfaces alike.
>
> The use of this conceit, as it may be called by some, will be seen to be very great, in the process of this work: and the oftener we think of objects in this shell-like manner, we shall facilitate and strengthen our conception of any particular part of the surface of an object we are viewing, by acquiring thereby a more perfect knowledge of the whole, to which it belongs: because the imagination will naturally enter into the vacant space within this shell, and there at once, as from a centre, view the whole, and make us masters of the meaning of every view of the object, as we walk round it, and view it from without.[8]

Hogarth goes on to point out that imitation of itself, although momen-

tarily entertaining, soon palls and will always give way to a superior love of variety.

> If the uniformity of figures, parts or lines, were truly the chief cause of beauty, the more exactly uniform their appearances were kept the more pleasure the eye would receive: but this is so far from being the case, that when the mind has been once satisfied, that the parts answer one another, with so exact an uniformity, as to preserve to the whole the character of fitness to stand, to move, to sink, to swim, to fly, etc., without losing the balance: the eye is rejoiced to see the object turned, and shifted, so as to vary these uniform appearances.[9]

Hogarth, like many artists and writers on art before his time and since, remained largely unaware of the expanse of feeling which lies between the observable expressive act and the concrete situation which engenders it. This intervening area between the symbolically meaningful expressive act and immediate, automatic nervous response is largely passed over as the 'natural' part of art and to talk of it inevitably leads one out of the field of art proper and into the realm of speculation about the nature of sentience itself. Hogarth merely indicates the existence of this area of feeling, pointing to what still remains, philosophically speaking, largely uncharted territory. He comes back again to this area of feeling as expressed symbolically in art when describing the spacial conformation of a horn.

> Observe first that the whole horn acquires a beauty by its being . . . genteelly bent two different ways; secondly, that whatever lines are drawn on its external surface became graceful, as they must all of them, from the twist that is given the horn, partake in some degree or other, of the shape of the serpentine-line; and, lastly, when the horn is split, and the inner as well as the outward surface of its shell-like form is exposed, the eye is peculiarly entertained and relieved in the pursuit of these serpentine-lines, as in their twistings their concavities and convexities are alternately offer'd to its view. Hollow forms, therefore, composed of such lines are extremely beautiful and pleasing to the eye: in many cases more so, than those of solid bodies.
>
> Almost all the muscles, and bones, of which the human form is composed, have more, or less of these kind of twists in them; and give in a less degree, the same kind of appearance to the parts which cover them, and are the immediate object of the eye.[10]

In these passages Hogarth suggests how perception can be enriched by developing an awareness of its accompanying feeling states, but he leaves undeveloped his theories about the creation in art of formal analogies to sensuous experience. His reference to the bodily feelings which underlie perception remains, however, one of the very few examples of an artist attempting, within the context of a theory of art, to bridge the gap between the 'studio language' familiar to artists and the equally specialized but more ordered language of the aesthetician or the psychologist. Where

a critic such as Ruskin might take his exploration of the imagination no further than its veridical or constructive forms, Hogarth suggests deeper levels reaching back to the origin of expressive form itself and ultimately to the genetic origin of expression in sentient awareness.

6

If the distinguishing factor between a simple drawing and a drawing which is intended to be a work of art lies in the degree to which our imagination is stimulated into active involvement with the drawing, the particular nature of this imaginative involvement needs further examination; for it is possible that drawings which are not in any way intended to be works of art may yet elicit an imaginative response similar to that evoked by some works of art. They may, for example, stimulate the imagination to reconstruct in detail the reality which the drawing is intended to represent. But if they do no more than this, if they involve the imagination only at the level of imitation, their standing as works of art in any but a superficial sense must remain in doubt. Should a drawing go beyond this and re-form or re-fashion reality, thereby stimulating the imagination not merely to note the similarities between the drawing and reality but also to compose a new fictive structure of its own, then such a drawing may be placed with greater confidence within the category of art.

There may yet remain the question whether to make drawings of this sort requires more than simply a high degree of technical skill or craftsmanship, but at the highest level of technical accomplishment the dividing line between art and craft is notably difficult to draw.

For a drawing to be classified as a work of art, in the full sense of that term, some evidence would need to be present of the artist's bodily involvement with his invented forms appearing as a gestural accompaniment or inflexion upon mimicry or invention.

Finally, if I have not mentioned the aesthetic to any great extent in this paper, it is because like the term 'imagination', and indeed 'art', it is a term which suggests merely the starting point for enquiry but does not in itself provide more than a convenient territorial division for future prospecting and exploration. It may now be timely for aestheticians to begin to chart the numerous sub-features of that landscape which is often somewhat loosely called 'the aesthetic' in art.

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[3] J. Ruskin, *Lectures on Architecture and and Painting* (1907), p. 219.

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[6] E. McCurdy, (ed.), *Leonardo da Vinci's Note-Books*, (1935), p. 178.

[7] Pope-Hennessey, J., 'The Interaction of Painting and Sculpture in Florence in the Fifteenth Century', *The Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, Vol. CXVII, No. 5154 (May, 1968).

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THE LANGUAGES OF ART*

H. Gene Blocker

> Painterly and draughtsmanly, on the other hand, are like two languages, in which everything can be said, although each has its strength in a different direction and may have proceeded to visibility from a different angle.[1]

SINCE WÖLFFLIN's suggestive remark some fifty years ago the consideration of artistic genres or styles as distinct languages has become an increasingly popular analogy, receiving its most exhaustive application in Goodman's *Languages of Art*.[2] The comparison has proved extremely useful in clarifying a number of related aesthetic phenomena. It articulates the sense in which a work of art 'says' something, while at the same time emphasizing the difficulty of 'translating' what the art work 'says' into some alternative critical or art 'language'. It has helped to clarify, in other words, that troubling relation of form and content in art. More important, it has brought to light the rule-like conventionality of any artistic form of expression to which our natural ethnocentrism tends to blind us. But there are limits to the usefulness of any analogy, and large and important differences between languages and forms of artistic expression tend to be obscured in the recent enthusiasm over the 'languages of art'. In what follows I will try to repair this imbalance somewhat by emphasizing important respects in which art forms are *not* like languages, the sense in which this otherwise illuminating comparison can be misleading.

'House' and Fig. 1 are both conventional representations of a house. The latter convention might be phrased: 'Trace the boundary of an object (from the "standard" perspective) with a continuous line.' Both are conventional in the sense that they are not the only ways of representing a house but only two ways which we have 'selected' out of many possible ways and which must therefore be learned. Without some familiarity with the use of these conventions neither symbol would be understood to stand for or look like a house. But there is an obvious difference between

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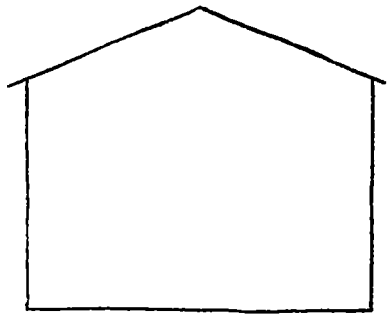


Figure 1

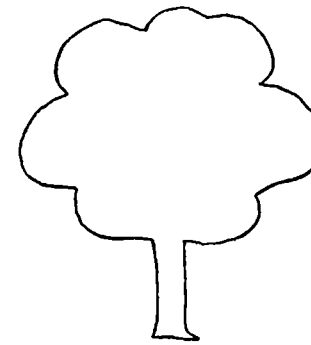


Figure 2

the two. Knowing that 'house' means house will not tell you what 'tree' means, whereas once you know what Fig. 1 means you know what Fig. 2 means as well. In fact you understand every symbol in the group as soon as you understand any one of them. Indeed this is a test of having learned the symbol: if you cannot go on to interpret correctly other pictorial symbols without further instruction, you have not understood the first symbol. And this means that the first symbol was offered simply as an example illustrating the general rule for reading the whole set of symbols. The difficulty in learning a natural language is precisely that its symbols must be learned bit by bit, rule by rule, whereas we grasp a pictorial language in one gulp as soon as we have understood the overriding rule which the given illustrations exemplify.

There are comparable blanket rules for understanding a natural language as well, but unlike a pictorial language they provide only the barest beginnings. A necessary condition for learning one's first natural language, for example, is understanding generally that verbal noises can be used to communicate one's desires and that marks on paper can be used to represent things. There are also general rules of grammatical construction. But these are obviously not enough to enable anyone to master the language. The conventions governing a pictorial language, if it works at all, illuminate everything at once, applying universally or not at all; and this, ironically, is the main point of Wölfflin's initial comparison of 'universal forms of representation' to 'languages in which *everything* can be said'.

A better example can be found perhaps in perspective drawing. Arnheim offers an interesting imaginary debate between opposed spokesmen for Renaissance (Fig. 3) and Egyptian (Fig. 4) conceptions of pictorial realism. Each is locked within his own convention, unable to understand

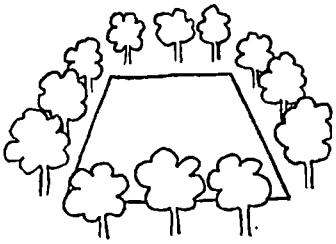


Figure 3

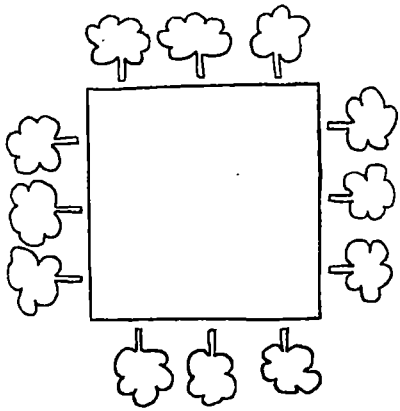


Figure 4

the other's realism except as a mass of confusions and inaccuracies. The Westerner defends the perspectival realism of the accurately projected image of a square pond surrounded by trees on to a flat surface (Fig. 3), while the Egyptian insists that a square pond should be *drawn* as a square, trees of equal size the same size in the *picture*, as faithfully rendered in the Egyptian drawing (Fig. 4).
As Arnheim puts it:

> The Egyptian might criticize the perspective drawing as follows: 'This picture is all wrong and very confusing! The shape of the pond is distorted. It is an irregular quadrilateral rather than a square. In reality the trees surround the pond symmetrically and meet the ground at a right angle. Also, they are all of equal size. In the picture some of the trees are in the water, some outside. Some meet the ground perpendicularly, others obliquely; and some of them are taller than others.' If the Westerner retorted that the Egyptian's own pond was acceptable only as an airplane view and that all the trees were lying flat on the ground, the Egyptian would find this impossible to see and hard to understand.[3]

It is quite true that the Egyptian would in all likelihood not see the perspective drawing as realistic at first and the reason for this is equally clearly that he does not know the conventions governing perspective art, namely to look at a picture, not as a picture, but as one would look through a pane of glass at a real pond a hundred feet behind it; to treat the picture, in other words, not as a picture, but as a source of stimuli producing roughly the same causes of perception (e.g. the retinal projection) as an actual pond one hundred feet away would produce. But once the Egyptian understands the rule, however strange he may find it, he imme-

diately sees the realism in this and every other perspective drawing and the sense in which his drawing, and all others like it, is incorrect. There *are* conventions involved and we are indebted in part to the 'languages of art' analogy for making this clear; but the pictorial conventions, unlike linguistic conventions, act as a blanket criterion bringing everything in every perspective drawing into a immediate sharp focus of realism.

Two questions arise from this distinction: What are its consequences, and How can we explain it?

1. CONSEQUENCES. The result of this difference is that the 'meanings' of the 'symbols' within the art 'language' become *perceptible* in a way they cannot in a natural language. While the conventions of a natural language attach piecemeal to the units of meaning within that language, the conventionality of a pictorial 'language' applies to the art form as a whole and not to the individual elements within any given work of art. As a result we don't *read* pictures, we *look* at them. Indeed the reason it becomes necessary to lay such stress on the conventionality of an art genre is precisely because it doesn't look like a convention. The convention acts as a general guideline for perception, helping us attain the proper focus, as it were, after which it quietly drops into the unperceived background, where we soon forget and need to be reminded from time to time that it is, after all, a convention.

An artistic convention, then, unlike ordinary linguistic conventions, must be visually convincing. Once we have got the convention, then *within* that convention we must be able to *see* this as a house, that as a tree, and so on. Once the Egyptian gets the convention, the trapezoidal shape of the pond *looks* square. Indeed, this is not just a consequence but a necessary condition and criterion for his understanding the convention. 'Now I see it!' marks his report of a dawning recognition of the new convention; the recognition of the pictorial convention is simultaneously a recognition of pictorial realism. While it would be naïve to ignore the conventionality involved in any realistic art, it would be equally wrong to lose sight of the genuine illusionistic effects of mimetic art. The value of Gombrich's *Art and Illusion* lies precisely in his persistent refusal to discount this much maligned aspect of pictorial art.

2. EXPLANATION. The reason for the difference between linguistic and pictorial conventions is that the latter are not pure conventions. They result in visually convincing art because they establish links with perceived reality, binding the picture to its subject matter in at least one important visual respect. If it is to work pictorially, an artistic convention must conform to some corresponding feature of the depicted reality based on some visual resemblance.

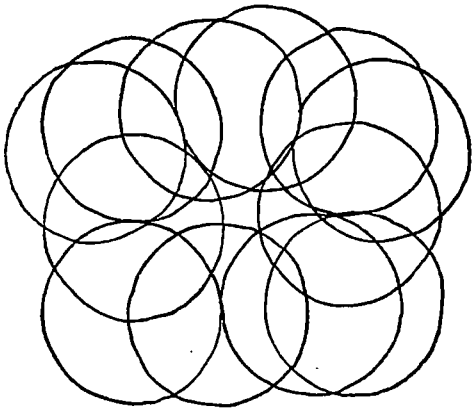


Figure 5

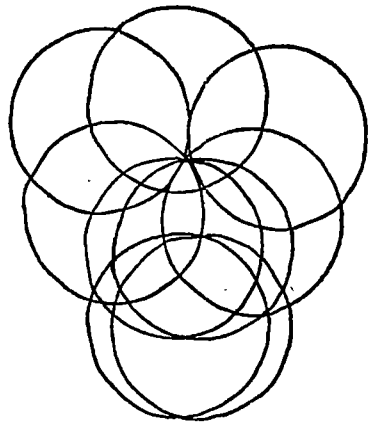


Figure 6

Consider the convention mentioned earlier to trace the boundary with a line. This is conventional in the sense that there can be no unmediated duplication of an object into its pictorial double. Objects do not come bounded by fine black lines. But they do have abrupt spatial boundaries, the abruptness of which is rather *like* a fine, black line (only thinner). Lines are, therefore, capable of conveying the sharp outlines of ordinary physical objects and thereby of convincingly representing them in their visual configurations.

We are free, of course, to reject this convention in favour, say, of a more 'painterly' convention; but we are not free to adopt any convention we please, even though it be clearly formulated and consistently applied. Because any convention which does not conform to some perceptible and pervasive aspect of reality simply will not work, that is it will not be, and cannot become, visually convincing. We are not free, for example, to represent the shapes of objects by tracing their boundaries by overlapping circles the size of the object depicted (Figs. 5 and 6).

Neither house nor tree is convincing in this scheme, nor can we even intellectually distinguish the two. We 'cannot' adopt this convention in the sense that we cannot convincingly depict objects by using that convention, and the reason we cannot do this is that this convention is not bound by visual resemblance to any perceptible aspect of reality. Because a workable convention is perceptually joined to reality, a *sense* of realism (misleadingly referred to traditionally as 'illusionistic') is achieved *in addition to* the ordinary criteria for correctness found in any linguistic system. Given the above convention, Fig. 2 is a good representation

of a tree and a bad one of a house because the shape formed by the pictorial line resembles the perceptible shape of a tree and not of a house.

It is not truly 'illusionistic' because it requires that we ignore all those respects in which the drawing is *not* like the perceived reality (both object and background homogeneously white, for example), and this requires a learned response to a convention. In this sense no art is illusionistic—except, oddly, in the case of Renaissance art—in intention. Nonetheless a sense of realism is achieved because the pictorial rule must be followed visually, the convention acting as a set of directions how to see: what to look for and what to ignore. The symbol 'looks like' a tree in the sense that the convention acts as a filter for selecting a genuinely perceptible aspect of a tree (its outline). Learning the convention also presupposes the visual ability to abstract and attend to this aspect of the perceived object in isolation from everything else. In so far as we are conscious of this selection and abstraction we are not deceived but perfectly aware that we are looking at a picture, but in so far as the convention selects an aspect of reality which we can trace visually, it nonetheless 'looks like' its subject matter.

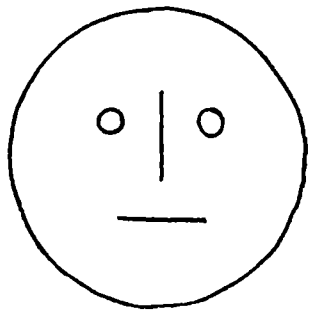


Figure 7

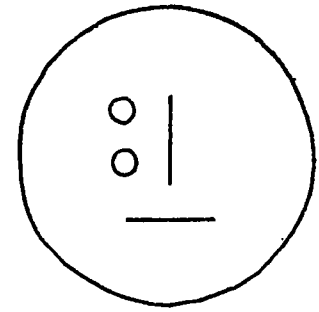


Figure 8

This holds even in a relatively stylized convention like that which appears to govern a certain developmental level in children's art, viz. of mapping the spatial geography of the parts of an object, using lines or circles to represent those parts. Within this convention Fig. 7 is the correct, Fig. 8 the incorrect, rendering of a face. The first 'looks like', or is visually acceptable as, a face because even though eyes are not circular or noses thin lines, the drawing correctly maps the spatial relations between head, eyes, nose and mouth. The two correspond in a visual resemblance at least in this one respect, and that is just enough to meet the minimal requirement for visual acceptability. It is relatively stylized, but only to

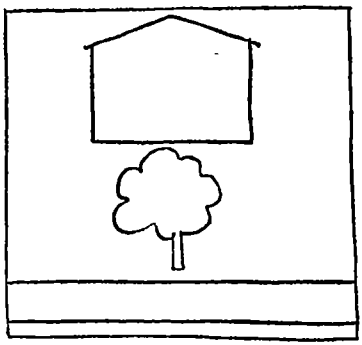


Figure 9

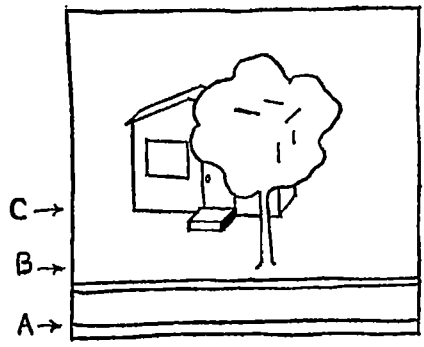


Figure 10

the extent to which it filters out ordinarily perceptible features of a face.

Finally, consider the following conventions for representing the third dimension of spatial depth by means of the vertical position on the two-dimensional picture surface: (a) the *higher* on the page, the greater the recessional distance (Fig. 9), and (b) the *lower* on the page the greater the recessional distance (Fig. 10). Both are equally clear in their interpretation and application, yet only the first is a possible artistic convention because only the first is, and can be, visually convincing. Fig. 9 *can* be, though it *need* not be, read and seen as 'a tree in front of a house between the house and the road', but it cannot be visually understood to mean 'a house in front of a tree with a road behind the tree'. And the reason is that despite the obvious stylistic deformation of the visual reality in the drawing, the first but not the second reading corresponds with some perceptible aspect of that reality, a correspondence based on a visual similarity between this vertical positioning and ordinary vision.

The proof of this is hard to show pictorially because of the lack of any pictorial equivalent of objective vision. As Gombrich and Arnheim have convincingly shown, there is no thoroughly 'neutral naturalism'. But for purposes of illustration let us rest momentarily in the arms of our own deepest prejudices and compare the schematic drawing above with a photograph (actually a drawing to represent one) as providing a standard of at least certain elements of objective vision pertinent to our example (Fig. 10). Using this as our standard (ignoring for the moment its conventionality) we see that although Fig. 9 does not show (for purposes of clarity, one might argue) the overlapping of the tree on the house (so that part of the tree is in the same vertical plane as an object behind it) or the diminishing size of the projected images of objects receding in the distance,

which the photograph captures (Fig. 10), there is *some* correspondence in the latter between depth and vertical position. In Fig. 10 the base of the road (A) *is* lower on the picture plane than the base of the tree (B), which in turn is lower than the base of the house (C) behind it. Were the objects of the same size, the same correspondence would exist between the vertical position of the tops and centres of the objects and their three-dimensional position. Of course if the distance between the objects is great enough, say between the road and the house (ignoring for the moment the tree), the photograph would approximate even more closely our schematic drawing in elevating the entire house above the road with no overlapping.

To eliminate some of the admittedly embarrassing circularity of judging one set of conventions by another (those of the drawing in Fig. 9 by a photograph, in Fig. 10), compare the schematic drawing (Fig. 9) with the vertical positioning of objects in ordinary vision by simply looking at objects at a distance (through a window, perhaps, or against some other vertical scale), and then what has been said of the correspondence of the drawing to the photograph will be equally true of its correspondence to ordinary vision.

The point is simply that, like most terms used in aesthetics, 'languages of art' is an analogy borrowed from another area of discourse. So long as we keep in mind their analogical use, such terms can be useful to bring out certain illuminating points of similarity without seducing us into supposing that an art form just *is* a language, that is like a language in *every* respect. In particular the conventionality of representational art forms must not blind us to that undeniable visual sense of realism within conventions linked to some pervasive aspect of perceived reality.

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[2] Nelson Goodman, *Language of Art*, (1968). See also: Matthew Luckiesch, *The Language of Color*, 1918. Gyorgy Kepes, *Language of Vision*, 1947. Philip Beam, *The Language of Art*, 1958. Edward Hill, *The Language of Drawing*, 1966. John Barron, *The Language of Painting*, 1967. Arthur Pope, *The Language of Drawing and Painting*, 1968. Donald Weismann, *Language and Visual Form*, 1968. Rod Whitaker, *The Language of Film*, 1970. Mark Slade, *Languages of Change, Images of Man*, 1972.

[3] Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception* (1969), p. 96. Some examples of Egyptian art, like the garden scene from the tomb of Rekmira (18th Dynasty), match Arnheim's sketch fairly well, though others, like the pond scene from the rock tomb at Thebes (also 18th

Dynasty), now housed in the British Museum, do not. There the trees on the lower side of the pond rise *upward*, as in the Rennaissance drawing. This would considerably complicate the conventions involved in Arnheim's example, introducing a dual horizon line cleverly integrated by two aerially interpreted vertical lines to form the square shape of the pond.

BOOK REVIEWS

Art Students Observed. By CHARLES MADGE and BARBARA WEINBERGER. Faber and Faber, pp. 282. £6·95.

'ACCURACY IN addition and straight lines are a national want.' Thus Henry Cole in 1857 at the start of organized art education in this country. Satirized by Dickens as the government inspector in *Hard Times* ['You must use,' said that gentleman, 'for all purposes, combinations and modifications (in primary colours) of mathematical figures which are susceptible of proof and demonstration. This is the new discovery. This is fact. This is taste.'] Cole embodied the 'no nonsense' approach to art which is a constant theme in the government's dealings with art schools over the intervening years.

The problem has always centred about fine art. The early art schools had very limited aims; they were set up to train students in the narrow skills of copying from a small range of approved models. The system was organized and controlled from South Kensington where the officers of the method were trained. But once away from the puritanical and intolerant influence of Henry Cole the officers began to back-track on their vows and dally with alien creeds. Inspectors were sent out to bring them back into line but after each sortie there was more doubt about the value of the system and criticism of its effects. What had begun as a seemingly straightforward exercise in training future artisans in a few rudimentary craft skills had run up against art. The government having set out to educate the country in what it believed to be art found itself being educated by life. Having little knowledge or understanding of art it had mistaken the monkey for the organ-grinder. The rest would be high comedy if there were not such an insistent note of tragedy running underneath.

In *Art Students Observed* Charles Madge and Barbara Weinberger bring the story up to date. The scene is a school of art in the Midlands described under the pseudonym of Midville College of Art. The time is 1967 to 1969 and the inspectors have been around once again. But this time their views are broader and on the face of it more tolerant. Art is now accepted as a proper concern for art schools. Unfortunately no one, neither the inspectors nor the staff, knows what it is. In dealing with this irksome problem the staff adopt various strategies: they swear and they bully or they admit their perplexity and offer no opinions at all. If pressed they may say what art is not. It is nothing the students have done at school. It has nothing to do with expression and it has very little to do with the art world outside the college, as the students find out when their small exhibition, assembled to prove to their tutors that they are not the awkward squad which their tutors believe them to be, passes without interest or comment from those whose notice the students would like to attract—the critics, the reporters, the art journal editors and the gallery owners.

In the absence of any strong tradition or any commonly accepted theory of art

institutional coherence is fashioned out of personality alone and learning to become an individual, 'self-directed' artistic personality, is what the course at Midville is mainly about. Students are thrown into such doubt and confusion that they are forced to construct for themselves reasons for what seems to them on occasion to be aimless activity in order to justify the hours they spend on it. They are forced again and again to define art, each definition being invariably rejected as inadequate. As the term 'aesthetics' is used as the final desperate expression of abuse this is hardly surprising, but if the students were to arrive at an adequate definition of art would their tutors recognize it as such? Probably not, because most of them believe that any attempt to define art is doomed to failure.

But the question comes back and nags at them. What is art? The staff is insistent that the students should tell them. The students in response to this badgering either stop painting or sculpting and begin to write, producing gnomic utterances abounding in catachresis, or put themselves at some distance from their tutors either by working at home or building themselves defensive redoubts in the studios into which they crawl to escape from the coercive demand that they should explain their work. Some students, like 'Dave', adopt other strategies. Dave is apparently obsessed by chickens and devises elaborate rituals with them. The staff becomes anxious and forbids Dave to have anything more to do with chickens. Dave reappears with a carton of eggs. He takes 'readings' from them, covering sheets of graph paper with tiny figures. In a history of art seminar Dave gives a talk on'Vagueness'. When criticism is made of the intellectual soundness of some of his ideas he dissolves into laughter. Dave is the only one of the group to obtain a first class diploma, largely on the work he has done at home, and the only one to proceed to post-graduate study at the Royal College of Art.

What the inspectors have clearly indicated to Midville College of Art is that art is now acceptable so long as it is made dependent upon the word. Art, having ceased to be craft, has now become philosophy or criticism and the students' work is produced to illustrate a particular philosophical or critical point. But in order to ensure that they do not become too ensnared by discursive reasoning or logical analysis they are diverted away from deep or serious study of philosophical and critical method and taught to treat it in a loose and peremptory manner. Art at Midville, in short, has become as nearly cognitive as it can get without ceasing to be art.

English art has traditionally been an art of illustration and what *Art Students Observed* describes may simply be the latest manifestation of this attitude in contemporary art education. Artists are by nature sensitive people and inclined to ward off the abuses of the world by excessive dogmatism and arrogance designed to repel those influences which would disturb their sedulously cultivated private worlds. The comment which this book implicitly makes on the confusion at Midville is equally a comment on a society which drives the sensitive and intelligent student with an interest in art to occasional outburts of neurotic or irrational behaviour and also a comment upon what happens when educational policies arising out of a narrow conception of art drive down on those it categorizes as eccentric or abnormal.

The influence of Henry Cole may no longer emanate from South Kensington but, as this book shows, his descendants, for whom facts proffer some comfort in an insecure world, are still very much alive in art education today.

PHILIP MEESON
Brighton College of Education

The Arts and Human Development. By HOWARD GARDNER. John Wiley & Sons, New York. 1973. pp. 395. Ill. 31.

Aesthetic Judgment and Arousal. By GERDA SMETS. Leuven University Press. 1973. pp. 106.

Craft and Consciousness. By JOSEPH BENSMAN and ROBERT LILIENFELD. John Wiley & Sons. New York. 1973. pp. 369.

HOWARD GARDNER will be familiar to readers of this journal through his article *From Mode to Symbol* (Vol. 10. No. 4, 1970), in which he put forward a hypothesis to account for the early stages of symbol use in infants. Suggesting how bodily functions or 'modes' may be associated vectorially with particular feeling states, which then become separated and 'distanced' from their source in basic sensori-motor activity, Gardner took enquiry into the genesis of the symbol in the initial stages of language acquisition back further into the period of infancy than other writers, notably Werner and Kaplan, had hitherto proposed. Gardner also outlined a possible way of dealing with the familiar problem of how scientific methods of enquiry might be adapted to the analysis of works of art by adopting what is in essence a phenomenological method and he pointed out also possible ways of bringing together traditional aesthetics with psychology and the developing philosophical study of craft technology and performing skills.

This article has now been extended to form part of a book, *The Arts and Human Development,* in which the author makes the development of skill in the creation of symbols and our response to symbols central to the study of art. In doing this he emphasizes the 'intentionality' of the artistic symbol, thus drawing a clear distinction between art and nature and between the aesthetic attitude as a loosely defined state of mind and that attitude of imaginative participation in the symbolic structure of works of art which, he argues, is characteristic of our experience of the aesthetic in art. He suggests that the three systems or attitudes of making, perceiving and feeling form the basis out of which the artistic symbol grows and that all must go together as the artist develops and extends his powers of expression.

Gardner's view that the single most important question in aesthetic education is how command of a medium can be acquired takes him beyond those (notably Langer) who whilst agreeing that embodiment provides the key to our understanding of the artistic symbol lay comparatively little emphasis upon the acquisition of skills, sensitivity to patterns, etc., and also beyond the Gestaltists who, he argues, say little about the creation of new works of art. He is particularly critical of psychoanalytical methods and behaviourism, both of which bypass the problem of language development, and of scientific tradition generally which, he maintains, has severed the affective from the cognitive domains.

What he calls 'hard-nosed psychology' will no doubt object that his notion of modes and vectors defies ready analysis into quantifiable, experimentally controllable dimensions; but the gain, as he sees it, to a more complete understanding of human behaviour by the abandonment of reductionist scientific methods more than offsets any abuse which his approach may cause to traditional science.

Readers who are concerned with art in education will get much from this book. The author brings a considerable amount of new thought to bear on major questions which pass by largely unrecognized within current art educational literature. His view that the child of 5 to 7 years is an artist becomes more than mere incantation, which it often tends to be in education, when he qualifies the term 'artist' to mean no more than one able to use symbols in order to communicate or express an idea, pointing out that this says nothing about

artistic or aesthetic value. The popular view that artistic skills evolve naturally in children receives strong criticism here and by emphasizing the importance of cultural influences upon artistic development Gardner suggests where the deficiency lies in those educational theories which assume individuality in art to be of paramount importance.

In *Aesthetic Judgment and Arousal* Gerda Smets reports on six experiments designed to test the effect on a variety of subjects of perceiving certain shapes, colours and patterns. This effect is measured on an electroencephalogram against the normal alpha rhythm of the unstimulated brain and it allows reasonably accurate measurement to be made of aesthetic judgement as a function of arousal. The writer is careful to point out that she interprets aesthetic judgement to mean a verbal or behavioural expression of information contained in a presented code and not judgement about the value of the code itself and she distinguishes between this approach and the approach of Gestalt psychology which, she points out, is in reality a psychology of perception only.

There are clearly differing views about the significance of experiments in the field of psycho-aesthetics, largely because they often seem to confuse perception with aesthetic response; but because Gerda Smets's experiments allow considerable room for the testing and judging process normally associated with aesthetic appraisal her findings would seem to have more obvious relevance to aesthetics as a whole. Of particular interest is her endorsement of the fact that aesthetic sensitivity shows itself as a preference for interesting stimuli rather than pleasant stimuli and that 'the trend of a line seems to imitate the motor activity of the expressed feeling', a point which has particular significance in relation to those theories which attempt to define the aesthetic in terms of information theory.

Firm evidence is provided here to contradict the popular opinion that *de gustibus non est disputandum* and sufficient also to stimulate further enquiry into the relationship between taste and art. Her finding that '. . . a monotonic relationship exists between the arousal potential of the stimulus and the arousal potential of its meaning', suggests practical applications of her findings in the field of product design as well as helping towards a clearer definition of meaning in the non-literary arts.

Craft and Consciousness by Joseph Bensman and Robert Lilienfeld is a phenomenological study of the occupational attitudes of a variety of professional activities. Intending readers should beware that it has nothing to do with craft in the accepted sense of the term but with 'Occupational Technique and the Development of World Images'. Some interesting points are made, however, about the relationship of criticism to art, but deeper discussion of this topic will be found elsewhere. The book might be useful to those looking for a convenient guide to the methodology of this type of enquiry.

PHILIP MEESON

Brighton College of Education

Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style. By MICHAEL BAXANDALL. Clarendon Press, 1972. pp. viii+165. Pl. 81 black and white+4 colour. £3·25p.

IT IS a platitude to assert that the life of a society is embodied in its art. This must be so, at least in a certain sense, since artists are members of human societies and therefore their work can be said to arise out of particular social contexts. However, the problem is to discern in just what forms social life can be seen to be embodied in works of art. Michael Baxandall claims that '. . . the *style* of pictures is a proper material of social history. Social facts . . . lead to the development of distinctive visual skills and habits: and these . . .

become identifiable elements in the painter's style' (p. v). So for Baxandall it is not to the thematic contents of fifteenth-century Italian painting that we should look in order to discover its social significance, but rather to its stylistic characteristics and the modes in which these were perceived by its contemporary public. The approach he is urging is a sort of social psychology of visual style.

Some earlier social-historical studies of Renaissance art, especially those with a Marxist approach, have been severely criticized for postulating a rather crude relationship between economic life and artistic activity. The consequence of this has been that sociologically minded students of the arts have become less bold and only claim indirect, hidden and unconscious links between artistic activity and economic structures. Thus it is refreshing to find Baxandall drawing our attention to the fact that there are some direct connections between the economic practices of a society and its modes of visual expression. 'Money is very important in the history of art' (p. 1). In particular he examines client–artist contracts and discusses their influence on the work actually produced. Only if we are aware, to take just one example, of the differential costs of different paints can we begin to perceive these paintings in the way that the Quattrocento audience did. Also the influence of arithmetic and geometry, arising out of commercial practice, on both the creation and the perception of paintings is examined at length. Another theme of this work concerns contemporaneous critical discussion of fifteenth-century Italian painting. Baxandall shows that we can only properly understand the terms in which this work was discussed and evaluated at that time if we look to the wider social context for the meaning of the critical vocabulary that was used.

This is an admirable little book that packs an awful lot of material into a small space. All the points made are substantiated by means of reference to the numerous high-quality illustrations. None the less a note of caution must be sounded, not so much with respect to the present work as to the future research it is likely to inspire. The author does seem, especially in his concluding remarks, to be rather apathetic about approaches to art of this type that are based on explicit theoretical premises. He does seem to be committed to an entirely empiricist method of study. It is all very well and good to give many particular instances of the relationships between works of art and their social contexts. However, unless one has a theoretical framework within which specific facts can be given a more general significance, there is the danger of becoming bogged down in a never-ending marsh of unrelated facts. For example, in his discussion of artist–client contracts Baxandall points out that the emphasis gradually shifted from payment for materials to payment for the skill of particular artists. What a purely empiricist approach cannot do is explain why this came about. It is only if we set this development within a more general perspective on the emergence of capitalist societies that the reasons for it can be made clear. Of course the approach of the present work is social-historical as opposed to sociological and it is the social historian's legitimate business to elucidate the detailed facts of a situation. Even so, let us hope that this line of enquiry will move in the direction of genuine understanding and explanation as opposed to providing the opportunity for rather arid scholastic exercises.

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The Black African Theatre and Its Social Functions. By BAKARY TRAORÉ. Translated by DAPO ADELUGBA. Ibadan University Press. 1972. pp. xvii+130.

FOR WHATEVER reasons it is the formerly

French parts of Africa rather than the ex-British colonies where a vigorous aesthetic culture has flourished during the era of independence. Thus the necessity for Dapo Adelugba to translate this thirteen-year-old survey of the Black African theatre into English even though, as he states in his Translator's Preface, he holds reservations about many of Traoré's propositions. In order to bring the study up to date an Epilogue written by the author in 1970 is included.

This work is largely concerned with West Africa because it was in the peasant societies there that myth and ritual, or 'traditional African theatre' as Traoré prefers to call it, had reached a comparatively sophisticated stage of development in the pre-colonial period and can now be used as the basis for a modern African theatre. Parallels are drawn between the African situation and the emergence of the classical Greek theatre from myth and ritual. Traoré conceives of what he calls the traditional African theatre in Durkheimian terms. That is, as having the social function of promoting 'collective consciousness', as a means whereby traditional community bonds were maintained.

The origins of the contemporary Black African theatre are located in L'École William Ponty of Senegal, where in the nineteen-thirties African students were encouraged to write and perform plays, using the French language, based on their indigenous customs. However, this movement was severely limited by the fact that the plays often took up a derogatory viewpoint on traditional African life. Together with the language barrier this prevented any mass audience arising and meant that the appeal of this theatre was essentially limited to the small Francophile African élite. The effective social function of the theatre movement was to encourage acceptance of the colonial status quo. This post-war period of demands for and the achievement of national independence has been characterized by rejection of an uncritical adoption of European dramatic forms and a growing interest in developing a Black African theatre firmly based on African as opposed to European culture. Traoré claims that: 'The first immediate preoccupation of a modern Negro-African theatre *is to identify itself with the struggle for the emancipation of Black Africa.*' (p. 105) This can only effectively be carried out if African languages are used.

Neither in terms of its literary nor of its sociological analysis is this work very inspiring. Although Traoré is a Senegalese himself, the study lacks the feel of being informed by first-hand observation of the trends it describes. It is entirely based on documentary sources of one kind or another and since these are rather limited in their scope a patchy picture emerges. None the less the book is a pioneer exploration and is worthy of attention on this score alone.

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Art, Perception, and Reality. By E. H. GOMBRICH, JULIAN HOCHBERG, MAX BLACK. John Hopkins University Press, 1972. Pp. x+132. $7.50

THE THREE essays, edited by Maurice Mandelbaum, were originally presented as the Alvin and Fanny Blaustein Thalheimer Lectures in the Department of Philosophy at Johns Hopkins University in 1970.

Professor Gombrich, writing on 'The Mask and the Face', takes up the ideas of his essay on caricature from *Art and Illusion.* The fact to be explained is the perceptual feat of recognizing identities and similarities involved in seeing a likeness, however rudimentary or distorted, between a picture and what it depicts. Mainly concerned with the depiction of the human person, Gombrich speaks of the physiognomic identity.

The experience of physiognomic recognition rests, he believes, on a fusion of often highly unlikely configurations. Establishing a likeness by noting resemblance is simply not enough, as logically speaking anything could be said to be like any other thing and yet we unthinkingly and without much effort recognize a person's underlying constancies in completely different perceptual representations. The examples, drawn from photographs (*e.g.* Bertrand Russell at 4 and at 90 years of age), portraits and caricatures, are lively and amusing, and often make their points as strikingly as Gombrich's extremely interesting remarks. The 'beholder's share', a phrase which already figured prominently in *Art and Illusion*, is made the centre of the discussion, courting and avoiding the complementary dangers of either postulating inborn capacities or taking refuge in pseudo-scientific constructionism. Gombrich separates the physiognomic constancies from the variables, bringing out their interplay in what is called the 'global impression' of a human face. Recognizing the same person in caricature, photograph or painted portrait depends, he suggests, on the skills with which we have learned to master the 'reading' of perceptual clues in a context understood to be physiognomic. Great caricaturists, photographers and artists have not just perfected their insight into the character of their sitters, but can actually discover character through representation, capturing a likeness as no mirror can. If Liebermann had not said it first to a dissatisfied sitter, Gombrich might well have invented the quotation with which the last sentence of the essay clinches his point: "This painting, my dear Sir, resembles you more than you do yourself."

Julian Hochberg's psychological investigation into 'The Representation of Things and People' relates closely to Gombrich's art historical interest. He asks how pictorial communication takes place, arguing that outmoded theories of perception have to be overcome before the facts of pictorial representation can begin to make theoretical sense. Both the empiricist conception of visual representation based on observed elements from which a picture is then mentally constructed and the Gestalt psychologists' conception of perceptual fields are shown up as inadequate to account for *e.g.* the resistance of pictures to perspectival distortion. On his own view visual perception is treated as 'skilled sequential purposive behaviour', and he attempts to combine in his theory the salient features of empirical structuralism and the Gestaltist reliance on strong configurations creating certain expectancies in experienced viewers. The neurophysiology and psychology on which this view draws for evidence is of the most up-to-date kind, incorporating the findings of computer science and information theory. Active looking as against passive awareness can be illuminated by analysis of the skills of reading and encoding. The picture as seen, Hochberg believes, is neither on the retina nor in the picture plane, but 'in the mind's eye'—an old formula re-instated as making surprisingly sound scientific sense.

Gombrich and Hochberg supplement and complement each other whilst practising their respective disciplines in thoroughly contemporary dress. The philosopher making up the trio, Max Black, adds his voice in the equally contemporary linguistic key.

'How do pictures represent?' The question is posed as one for conceptual analysis. This does not mean that Gombrich's illustrations and Hochberg's experimental findings are irrelevant to the philosopher. But the practitioners' problems are given just the right twist to turn them into puzzling questions of meaning. What do we mean when we

say that a picture represents something or somebody? Does a picture represent its subject in the same way in which a conventional representation—a map or a model or a diagram—represents its subject? One thing which emerges is that the concepts 'representation', 'subject', 'convention', etc. are in need of careful analysis. But the main task appears to be the search for criteria for *e.g.* depicting, portraying, displaying, etc. The likely candidates are examined in some detail. The appeal to the causal history of a depiction, i.e. the causal sequence gone into the making of a photograph or a painting, does not, he shows, yield a usable set of criteria for deciding what counts as a relation of depicting. The appeal to embodied 'information' seems more fruitful, as does the appeal to the intention of the producer of a picture; yet both have to be rejected on closer scrutiny. Considering depiction as illusion runs into difficulties over seeing something *as* something else, which leads to begging the entire question of criteria. The traditionally favoured approach *via* a resemblance relation is considered last; it too is found not to provide necessary conditions which must hold for all instances of depiction. After this careful and dispassionate demolition job we might well ask where we are going from here. Black does not wish to conclude on a purely negative note. All discredited approaches fail, he thinks, because we are looking to them in the hope of finding necessary and sufficient criteria. This is most likely a mistake. Some proposed conditions, whilst failing to fit this role, may yet prove *relevant* to the application of the concept of depiction. With this Wittgensteinian slant, Black can bring in all the conditions by the back door, as it were. Depicting emerges as a 'range-' or 'cluster-concept' whose criteria form a skein of conditions, 'none of them separately necessary or sufficient, but each of them relevant in the sense of potentially counting towards the proper application of the concept of depiction.'

All three contributions to this stimulating volume thus focus on an area in aesthetics where clear philosophical thinking and painstaking analysis, scientific procedure and good empirical discrimination as well as enlightened understanding of the history of art meet in their common concern with one of the most commonly practised and least explained human activities: making pictures, and understanding them as such.

EVA SCHAPER

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Art and the Religious Experience: The 'Language' of the Sacred. By F. DAVID MARTIN. Lewisburg. 1972. $15.00.

THERE IS a great deal which is of value in this book, but the reader will have to persevere with it. Even if he is used to the kinds of philosophy which the author finds sympathetic, he may well be irritated with the style, which is at times a curious amalgam of the jargon-ridden and the platitudinous. Central to both religion and the arts, in this author's view, is what he calls 'the participative experience'. The essence of this is that one is opened up to the influence of objects rather than simply trying to control or manipulate them. In the terminology which Martin takes over from Heidegger, art and religion both tend to counteract our obsession with the 'ontical' at the expense of the 'ontological'. 'Ontical obtuseness' (*e.g.* colour-blindness or mathematical incompetence) 'is caused by some organic deficiency or lack of training. Ontological obtuseness, on the other hand, is caused mainly by the exaltation of technical intelligence, *homo faber*, resulting in an ontical over-involvement that becomes a kind of intoxication' (48). Religious art differs from secular in that it

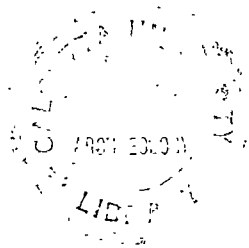
employs 'codified meanings which man through the ages has used to relate himself and pay homage to the ground of his being' (182).

In successive chapters this view is applied to the main varieties of art. The value that architecture has for us is due to the fact that 'we *know* space, but because of the anaesthesia of practicality, we fail to *feel* space' (228). On the perennial problem of the relation of literature to the actual course of life, Martin reminds us that 'in order to inform, a literary work must reform fact, but not to the point of losing all significant factual connection'. There is a certain 'pious violence' to the facts that may inform us more than mere accurate chronicle can do (194–6). Martin likes Heidegger's notion that man, particularly when 'ontologically' aware, is 'the shepherd of being', and he applies it a number of times; I enjoyed especially the idea of the abstract painter as a 'shepherd of sensa' (139). The chapter on music I found at once about the most obscure and the most suggestive. 'The inner continuity of some works of music with the religious dimension, such as the *War Requiem*, the *St Matthew Passion*, and *The Art of Fugue*, is a consequence of the iconicity of the tonal structures . . . with the feelings of ultimate concern, reverence, and peace, or feelings closely allied, that accompany a coercive experience of *Being*' (118). The *Art of Fugue* is argued to be a more religious work than *The Well-Tempered Clavier*; but I am not sure that the reasons for this, impressively as they read (124f.), amount to much more than the fact that the music in the former is on the whole more sententious and less varied in mood than that of the latter.

All in all, the book may be recommended as a mine of useful hints and intriguing irritants to persons interested in the problems of aesthetics.

HUGO MEYNELL

University of Leeds



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THE BRITISH SOCIETY OF AESTHETICS

THE Ninth National Conference of the Society will be held at Connaught Hall, 36–45 Tavistock Square, London WCIH 9EX, from 20th to 22nd September 1974. Will those who have *not* yet communicated with the organizer and who would like to have further details and registration forms please do so as soon as possible. Details and forms will be sent, probably in May, to all those who have asked to be placed on the mailing list. The deadline for return of registration forms and remittance of fees will be in early August. The organizer is Dr. T. J. Diffey, School of English and American Studies, Arts Building, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, Sussex, BN1 9QN.

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THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF AESTHETICS

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Journal of the BRITISH SOCIETY FOR PHENOMENOLOGY

Vol. 5. No. 2. May 1974

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WORKS OF ART AS PHYSICALLY EMBODIED AND CULTURALLY EMERGENT ENTITIES

Joseph Margolis

IT'S CLEAR that one's account of the nature of criticism and of the nature of a work of art are conceptually linked in the most intimate way. What we indicate we are talking about and what we may justifiably say of it depend on what it is; and what it is will be conceded by considering how it may be fixed and identified and what may be said of it. I have elsewhere tried to show that the problem of identifying and fixing the reference of a work of art and the concession of characteristically admissible critical remarks can be managed without deciding the precise ontological nature of a work of art;[1] that, on the contrary, a premature solution of that problem is bound to do violence to the concessions that must be made. I had put my point in terms of the avoidance of an excessive idealism that finds nothing in the public world that would count as a work of art and an excessive (or reductive) materialism that denies that anything exists that is not merely and entirely physical. I had attempted to show, also, how readily critics and historians of the arts confuse the logical status of their own comments because of their confusion about the nature of what they are commenting about.[2] But I was not able to formulate with any precision a theory of the actual ontological standing of a work of art fully congruent and sympathetic with the special problems of reference and characterization (particularly, interpretation) in the arts and responsive, at the same time, to the requirements of an informed account of the ontology of other kinds of entities. I hope here to redeem that limitation.

The clue I see is, I think, an intriguing one: admitting that they are enormously different, I believe that we treat *works of art* and *persons* as entities of a similar sort and speak about them in somewhat similar ways. Works of art, of course, characteristically lack minds; although when we think (however metaphorically) of man made in the image of God, of

Pygmalion's art, and of the possibility of intelligent robots, even this contrast begins to fade. But both works of art and persons (not, by the way, merely human persons if it turns out that there are persons in interstellar space or that dolphins should prove to be persons) are *culturally emergent entities*. Both are accorded a measure of rationality below which they cannot fall, on pain of failing to be a work of art or a person. The schemata employed in our discourse in order to make this clear about works of art are decidedly variable. But we may take it, as a rough approximation, that Kantian 'purposiveness without purpose' (generously construed, for instance as allowing works of art to be directed to an external purpose and as allowing 'found art' to be imputed purposiveness in terms of an appreciative tradition) fixes the form of rationality that may be minimally assigned to anything construed as a work of art; correspondingly, for persons, rationality or coherence, for instance among intention, belief, desire and action, cannot be absent in any creature thought to function as a person (one cannot for instance be said to intend to do what one is said to believe oneself incapable of doing, and one cannot be said to perform actions that are utterly incongruent with what one is said to want and desire and believe). The elaboration of the respective schemata is, somewhat narrowly, the concern of the philosophy of criticism and the philosophy of mind.[3]

Works of art and persons, I should say, are *embodied* in physical bodies (or marks or movements in the case of some works of art) and as emergent entities exhibit *emergent* properties. These two considerations serve as the foci of any relevant ontological proposal. Embodiment and emergence must be properly understood. But embodiment—however appropriately construed—enables us to answer questions about how we refer to and identify works of art and persons, as well as questions about the prospects of such a programme as that of a consistent materialism; and emergence—however appropriately construed—enables us to answer questions about the propriety of ascribing attributes of given sorts to entities of given sorts, as well as questions about the prospects of such a programme as that of resisting reductionism. What is interesting, then, is that precisely the same puzzles and the same manoeuvres obtain whether we speak of works of art or of persons and that these are just the classical puzzles and manoeuvres available elsewhere in the metaphysical enterprise.[4] I shall here stress the properties and nature of a work of art, with only the most economical suggestions about the corresponding mode of discourse regarding persons.

If a work of art is 'embodied' in a physical object, then whatever convenience of reference and identity may be claimed for a physical

object may be claimed for the work of art embodied in it in spite of the fact that to be embodied in an object is not to be identical with it. So embodiment can be readily seen to provide a possible basis for speaking of emergence without losing the advantages of reference and identity—the difficulty, precisely, of certain extreme forms of idealist views of works of art that locate them somehow in plural minds or in some vaguely specified 'space' of intersubjective ideology. Thus Michelangelo's *David* may be identified and referred to as a sculpture embodied in a particular block of marble; and thus identified, assuming that we understand how it is different from the marble and yet embodied in it, we may refer to it and attribute to it whatever properties it has. Physical objects have the advantage of being identifiable in exclusively extensional terms: the block of marble in which the *David* is embodied may validly be ascribed properties regardless of the description under which it is identified; its putative properties are in no way affected by the characterization under which it is identified as the thing it is. Alternatively put, physical objects have whatever properties they have, *qua* physical objects, independently of any cultural consideration and even independently of the existence of any culture; their properties do not depend on our coming to believe or know whatever we take them to be. What is true of purely physical objects, *qua* physical objects, is true of them however we may replace, in sentential contexts, the identifying expressions by which they are denoted or referred to; co-designative descriptions may be substituted in otherwise extensional contexts, *salva veritate*. But this is not true of *culturally* emergent entities (though it may be true of simple emergent entities, for instance of plants with respect to an inanimate world); hence it is not true of works of art (or of persons or even of actions ascribed to persons).

To say that a work of art is *embodied* in a physical object is to say that its identity is necessarily linked to the identity of the physical object in which it is embodied, though to identify the one is not to identify the other; it is also to say that, *qua* embodied, a work of art must possess properties other than those ascribed to the physical object in which it is embodied, though it may be said to possess (where relevant) the properties of that physical object as well. Also *if* in being embodied works of art are, specifically, *emergent entities*, then the properties that a work of art possesses will include properties *of a kind* that cannot appropriately be ascribed to the object in which it is embodied: there is a measure of adequation that needs to be acknowledged between entities *of* a certain kind and the *kind* of attributes ascribable to them as being of that kind. Finally if works of art, as emergent, are *culturally* emergent entities, then they will exhibit culturally significant properties that cannot be ascribed to the

merely physical objects in which they are embodied and, as such, identifying references to them will exhibit whatever limitations obtain on the ascription of such properties. These rather abstract theorems may be animated by considering the homeliest cases. Stones cannot properly be said to feel anger: it's not just that it is always false that stones feel angry; it's inappropriate to say that they do or don't. Human beings dream: it could not be said that the bodies in which they are embodied dream, *unless*, by some ontological ingenuity, persons could be said to be identical with their bodies.[5] And paintings may have expressive qualities, but not the mere physical pigments in which they are embodied.

Now to say that works of art (and persons) are culturally emergent entities is to say that though they are physically embodied and identifiable in so far as they are embodied, *they* can be identified only because they are embodied as they are and because they are culturally emergent entities that are embodied, And *that* means that there is nothing *to be* identified as embodied in suitable physical objects apart from what, in certain cultural contexts, would rightly be said to be thus embodied. The point of this consideration is simply that works of art cannot be identified as such except in a cultural context: only if we understand how, say, words can be culturally construed as embodied in sounds or marks or, say, José Limon's *Moor's Pavanne* in physical movements, can we even admit that there is anything to be identified, by some suitable conceptual linkage, with physical objects.

Works of art are identified extensionally only because, once we are clear about the kind of thing they are, we know that their identity can be straightforwardly linked with the identity of the physical objects in which they are embodied (but with which they are not identical). However they may be specified as the particular painting, dance, sonata, novel that they are, their identity will be linked with the identity of the physical marks and objects in which they are embodied. But to locate or specify something *as* a work of art thus embodied requires as well reference to the artistic and appreciative traditions of a given culture. Nowhere is this more strikingly clear than when we speak of 'found art'; for in speaking of found art, unless a person is suitably sensitized, he will not even see that there is a work of art *to be* identified by virtue of the identity of some physical object in which it is embodied. In this sense all art is found art—whether driftwood and smooth stones, or Duchamp's assemblages or constructions or readymades, or Michelangelo's *David*. To be aware of the presence of a work of art is, I am suggesting, to be aware of an object that (roughly speaking) exhibits purposiveness without purpose; and that to be aware of such an object is to construe some physical objects or

marks as supporting (by way of embodiment) a certain culturally emergent object. Only relative to some cultural tradition—normally continuous and congruent from society to society, but not always—can anything be identified as a work of art. Once identified, however, it always turns out that its identity depends on the identity of some physical object in which it is embodied. So works of art are said to be the particular objects they are, *in intensional contexts*, although they may be identified, by the linkage of embodiment, through the identity of what may be identified *in extensional contexts*. That is, works of art are identified extensionally in the sense that their identity (whatever they are) is controlled by the identity of what they are embodied in; but to identify them as what they are (thus embodied) can be accomplished only intensionally (by reference to the very cultural tradition in which they may actually be discriminated).

If I hold an appropriate theory of the work of creative artists (for instance, that they make sculptures out of marble, objects exhibiting at least a certain minimal purposiveness in terms of which ascriptions of representation, symbolic import, expressiveness and the like may be supportably made of particular sculptures) or of the appreciation of found art (for instance that we may under favourable conditions impute a corresponding purposiveness to objects without antecedent evidence of the work of a particular artist or without there having been an independent artist who actually made the object or without a particular artist's having 'made' the object in the full sense in which, traditionally, that was thought to be required), then, confronted with a physical object of a suitable sort, I will identify and make reference to a work of art that I take to be embodied in it. The reference I have made presupposes my grasp of a cultural tradition in which such reference is intelligible; and in fact the recognition that a given work of art actually exists and has the properties it has depends on the cultural tradition in terms of which a particular physical object may justifiably be said to embody a particular work of art and in terms of which critical practice will support particular attributions to particular works identified. Looking at an array of great stones I can speak of and attribute properties to the Japanese stone garden embodied in it only by reference to a suitable cultural tradition; but *the garden* will be identified by identifying the set of stones in which it is embodied. The reason, once again, we do not confuse the two is because (since they are different) not all the properties attributed to the one can be truly attributed to the other and because (since art is culturally emergent) not all the kinds of properties attributed to the one can be coherently attributed to the other. So reference to physical objects is extensional, in being context-free; and reference to works of art is intensional, in

depending on the contextual assumptions of particular cultures. Our theories about physical objects and works of art commit us to identifying the one extensionally and the other intensionally. There is nothing to be identified *as* a work of art except relative to a cultural concern with certain patterns of purposiveness that may be said to be embodied in a physical system that itself necessarily lacks all such properties.

Phenomenologically, we listen to music, gaze at a painting, read a poem: we ourselves are culturally habituated to notice works of art directly and to attend spontaneously to their distinctive powers and attributes. Even in language, however, where the physical constraints on meaningful discourse are minimal, we attend to cadence, to the properties of the speaking voice, to breathing, rhyme, alliteration and the like. In the literary arts a fully embodied medium (language) is antecedently prepared. In the other arts the medium is somewhat less completely prepared, in the sense that musical forms, dance movements and the like are not regularly used to facilitate independent and relatively self-sufficient modes of communication. Still the artistic and appreciative traditions of a culture prepare both would-be artists and would-be audiences to construe ordered physical materials as artistic *media*. Here a useful equivocation arises. For in mentioning media we mean to speak at one and the same time of the physical medium in which the work of art is embodied and of the artistic medium in which the (embodied) emergent work is actually formed. Thus a painting is embodied in the medium of coloured pigments applied to canvas; but, also, a painting emerges from the pigment as a purposive system of brush-strokes—that is *placed* colours and forms. Similarly a dance is embodied in physical movements but it is itself a system of articulated dance steps. Alternatively put, artistic media may themselves be construed as embodied (by way of particular brush-strokes, dance steps, words and phrases, and the like) in physical media.

These simple observations support certain extremely large distinctions. Works of art are Intentional objects of a culturally emergent sort and, because they are culturally emergent, they can only be identified, as such, intensionally. To say that they are Intentional is merely to say, in the Kantian manner, that they exhibit an interior purposiveness; they are composed of strokes, or steps, or phrases, or the like. It is not to say that works of art are *about* anything at all, although novels and poems are, characteristically, Intentional in this sense as well. But architecture and music and landscape gardening and carpets are normally not 'about' anything, normally do not refer to or denote anything at all.[6]

Human actions provide an instructive analogue. A man raises his arm

to signal; the action has that Intentional property. Apart from human society there is no such action, no more than a movement of the arm; within the conventions of a culture the action may be seen as such, embodied in the arm's movement, endowed with the Intentional property it is seen to have. The point is this: works of art and other culturally emergent entities are distinguished by their Intentional attributes (different attributes and different kinds of attributes for different kinds of entities); but neither they nor their attributes can be discriminated as embodied in physical objects (objects totally lacking Intentional properties) without reference, intensionally, to some culture—in accord with the traditions of which only, provision is made for the admission of such objects and such attributes.

To pursue the analogy, signalling occurs only in a cultural context (like works of art and persons). To identify an act of signalling one must identify a suitable physical movement that by reference to an appropriate tradition or rule or custom or the like may fairly be taken as embodying the act. So the very existence of the action depends on a cultural context, and its identification depends intensionally on reference to the appropriate features of the context in which it may be marked out; physical movements (and, correspondingly, physical bodies) never exhibit this trait. Moreover actions are characteristically thought to be performed for reasons; and yet the reasons that may be assigned to an action can only be assigned to the action under a certain description. Discourse about reasons, therefore, is thoroughly intensional, in the sense that they cannot, *salva veritate*, be assigned to actions, in sentential contexts, indifferently to whatever co-designative terms may be used.[7]

Similarly a work of art can be identified as such only relative to a favourable culture with respect to the traditions of which it actually exists. But works of art exhibit a further ontological complication. They often cannot themselves be ascribed a coherent design, an internal purposiveness, without imputing by interpretation properties that yield a plausible and suitably complete purposiveness. Think, for instance, of interpreting a puzzling story like Kafka's *Penal Colony* or a painting like Leonardo's *Last Supper*. Is the representation of Leonardo's fresco to be construed in terms of Judas's betrayal or in terms of the institution of the Eucharist? And is the scene to be construed in terms of a pregnant moment of natural time or in terms of the timeless import of all relevant moments of the story? It's not simply that the ascription of certain properties to an object logically depends on the ascription of other properties—for instance, that being a square entails being a rectangle—but rather that the ascription of properties of certain sorts and the appraisals of works of art

themselves depend on the identification of the work *under a certain description* (or interpretation), that is, they are intensionally qualified. For it is logically possible to identify one and the same work under alternative and incompatible interpretations (each interpretation compatible with the minimally describable features of the work in question), where the truth value of further characterizations and appraisals of given works will be affected by such intensional identification.[8] Isabel Hungerland, it may be remarked, once advocated that we accept 'that interpretation which does the best for the work, i.e. which results in the highest rating in the order of worth'[9] But she did not consider that the nature of the work is not first fixed and then interpreted; she did not consider that the work is itself identified *for* relevant description and appraisal *when* 'it' is interpreted (that is, when the embodying medium may be plausibly construed, by way of interpretation, to embody a work of a given design). This is the reason, also, that Checkov objected to Stanislavsky's portrayal of his plays as tragedies: the intensional characterization under which the plays are identified precludes certain further characterizations and appraisals *of the plays*.

What we see, then, is that discourse about works of art behaves intensionally in at least two distinct ways: first, in that works of art are identified intensionally relative to cultural contexts in which they may be said to be embodied in a physical medium; second, in that characterizations and appraisals of the work are relativized to plausible interpretations of the work (where relevant). It is, precisely, the physical embodiment of a work of art that minimizes the threat of common reference and common grounds for interpretative and appraisive dispute; for by linking the work of art to its embodying medium we minimize intensional considerations.

What shall we understand, then, by physical embodiment and cultural emergence? First of all we must admit a logically distinctive use of 'is', the 'is' of embodiment, not to be collapsed into the 'is' of identity, different in somewhat the same sense in which the 'is' of composition is different from that of identity.[10] Michelangelo's *David is* that block of marble (or, that block of marble *is* the *David*) in the sense only that the *David* is embodied in it. And second, to hold that one *entity* is embodied in another is simply to subscribe to a theory regarding different kinds of entities and the attributes properly ascribable to them such that reference can be made jointly to embodying and embodied entities. Embodied entities need not, of course, be emergent entities—though, characteristically, they will be; the issue concerns only the matter of the (ontological) adequation between entities and their attributes. Since everything there is is of one kind or another, being of a kind sets constraints on what may

properly be ascribed (whether truly or falsely) to any putative entity. In admitting entities of different kinds we implicitly admit the possibility of entities of one kind being embodied in entities of another—persons in sentient bodies; works of art in physical objects and movements. So embodiment is essentially a question of reference and attribution, ontologically construed. Consequently it raises no questions whatsoever of dualism or the like—no more than the question of composition does. Emergence, on the other hand, with regard to entities is concerned with the question of the enabling circumstances under which entities of given kinds first exist relative to a backdrop of entities of other sorts. Emergent entities need not, of course, be embodied entities—though, prominently, they include such. Perhaps plants may be construed as emergent entities not in any clear sense *embodied* in any other entity, even if *composed* of other entities (substances, for instance, or congeries of micro-theoretical entities). But *culturally* emergent entities—notably, persons and works of art—cannot but be embodied entities; for in speaking of such entities we mean to say, precisely, that within and only within the context of a cultural tradition we can identify certain entities (persons and works of art) that possess both certain distinctive Intentional attributes (not attributable to purely physical objects) and certain physical attributes (that may also be attributed to purely physical objects). Only if we admit the existence of embodied entities will this way of speaking be possible. Also the admission of emergent entities, accounted for either in terms of an artist's craft or in terms of an audience's tradition of appreciation, counts against reductionism, simply because of the intensional constraints on reference and attribution that must be admitted to obtain.

The upshot, then, is that to speak of works of art as physically embodied and culturally emergent is remarkably economical at the same time that it is hospitable to certain particularly puzzling features of the world of art. Provisionally, as I hope to have shown, some form, for example, of non-reductive materialism is entirely compatible with the admission of the Intentionality of works of art and the intensionality of reference to them and of appraisals based on the interpretation of works of art. These have always seemed to me to be most troublesome problems confronting ontological speculations about art.

REFERENCES

[1] Cf. Joseph Margolis, 'On Disputes about the Ontological Status of a Work of Art', *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, VIII (1968), 147–54; also, Joseph Margolis, *The Language of Art and Art Criticism* (1965), Ch. IV.

[2] Cf. Joseph Margolis, 'Critics and Literature', *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, XI (1971), 369–84; also, *The Language of Art and Art Criticism*, Chs. V–VI.

[3] I have sketched the need for these very briefly, both with regard to persons and with regard to works of art, in 'The Perils of Physicalism', *Mind*, LXXXII (1937), forthcoming; and 'Reductionism and Ontological Aspects of Consciousness', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, forthcoming.

[4] Cf. Joseph Margolis, *Knowledge and Existence* (1973), Chs. V, VIII.

[5] In effect, this points to the essential weakness of P. F. Strawson's *Individuals* (1959), for Strawson distinguishes material bodies and persons as basic particulars—equally so—but he never explains the relationship between bodies and persons. In the context of the philosophy of art an analogous problem concerns the relationship between, say, sculptures and blocks of marble, the relationship here characterized as embodiment.

[6] This points to a central weakness in Arthur Danto's theory of works of art. Cf. 'The Artworld', *Journal of Philosophy*, LXI (1964), 571–84, to which Danto has quite recently added this essential ingredient of 'aboutness' (for instance, at the State University of New York Conference on Philosophy and the Arts, November 2–4, 1973).

[7] Cf. Joseph Margolis, 'Puzzles about Explanation by Reasons and Explanations by Causes,' *Journal of Philosophy*, LXVII (1970), 187–95; also, Donald Davidson, 'Actions, Reasons, and Causes', *Journal of Philosophy*, LX (1963), 685–700.

[8] On the theory of interpretation cf. *The Language of Art and Art Criticism*, Pt. III; also 'Three Problems in Aesthetics', in Sidney Hook (ed.), *Art and Philosophy* (1966). The complications regarding the interpretation of Leonardo's fresco are discussed in a fourthcoming book by Leo Steinberg.

[9] 'The Concept of Intention in Art Criticism', *Journal of Philosophy*, LII (1955), 740.

[10] Cf. David Wiggins, *Identity and Spatio-temporal Continuity* (1967); also Margolis, *Knowledge and Existence*, Chs. V and VIII.

THE AESTHETIC IN SPORT

David Best

INTRODUCTION

There appears to be an increasing interest in looking at various sporting activities from the aesthetic point of view. In this paper I want to examine the relationship between sport and the aesthetic, and to attempt to sketch the logical character of this way of considering physical activities. My method of approach will be to trace out an important logical characteristic of paradigm cases of objects of the aesthetic attitude, namely works of art, and go on to see whether, or to what extent, it is applicable to sport.

THE AESTHETIC: CONCEPT NOT CONTENT

First, it might be asked whether it is possible to consider all sports from the aesthetic point of view, when one takes account of the great and increasingly varied range of such activities. That question, at least, can be answered clearly in the affirmative, for one can look at any object or activity from the aesthetic point of view—cars, houses, mountains, even mathematical proofs and philosophical arguments.

This raises a point about which it is important to be clear at the outset, which is that it is less conducive to error to regard the aesthetic as a concept than a content—as a way of perceiving an object or activity rather than a constituent feature of that object or activity. One sometimes hears talk of the aesthetic content of an activity, which gives the misleading impression of the aesthetic as an element or characteristic which could be added or subtracted. Such a misconception is closely related to the pernicious assumption that there must be some common property or set of properties in all those objects which can properly be said to be of aesthetic interest. This sometimes leads to suspicions by the scientifically minded that those who are concerned with the aesthetic must be up to something mistily metaphysical, since the presence of this aesthetic content in an activity or object cannot be empirically verified by scientific procedures. These suspicions are without foundation for despite the dubious

metaphysics of much writing on the subject, aesthetic judgements, like any other judgements, are intelligible only if they are ultimately answerable to what is, at least in principle, empirically observable. Yet that is not to say that they are scientifically verifiable, since the scientific is not the only way of considering what is available to sensory perception. A car may be assessed from the point of view of performance—road-holding, acceleration, petrol consumption, etc.—for the accurate testing of which scientific procedures are important. But such procedures would be quite inappropriate for answering questions about whether it were of attractive appearance. Nevertheless, such questions would require answers which referred to observable features of the car. Questions concerning its appearance come under a different aspect; they are answered in a different way.

THE AESTHETIC POINT OF VIEW

It may be true that everything can be considered from the aesthetic aspect, but it is equally true that some activities and objects are more centrally of aesthetic interest than others. Works of art, to take an obvious example, are primarily of aesthetic interest, though even they can be considered from other points of view: a piece of sculpture might be used as a paper-weight, and paintings often are used as an investment. The question now arises as to what it is to look at something from the aesthetic point of view, what it is which marks off this from other ways of looking at objects. One important characteristic which has been the subject of some attention in recent philosophical writings is that the aesthetic is a non-functional or non-purposive concept. To take a central example again, when we are considering a work of art from the aesthetic point of view we are not considering it in relation to some external function or purpose it serves. The work of art cannot be evaluated aesthetically according to its degree of success in achieving some such extrinsic end. By contrast when a painting, for instance, is considered from the point of view of an investment, then it is assessed in relation to an extrinsic end, namely that of maximum appreciation in financial value. Its success is measured against the way in which other investments, say in stocks and shares, increase in monetary value.

This characteristic of the aesthetic immediately raises an insuperable objection to theories which propose an over-simple relation between sport and the aesthetic by identifying them too closely. For example, it is sometimes claimed that sport just *is* an art form (for examples see Anthony, 1968), and sometimes that the aesthetic is the unifying concept or characteristic in all the activities which come under the umbrella of

physical education (see Carlisle, 1969). But there are many sports, indeed the great majority, which are like the case of the painting considered as an investment in that there is an identifiable aim or purpose which is of far greater importance than the way it is accomplished. That is, the *manner* of achievement of the primary purpose is of little or no significance as long as it comes within the rules. For example, from the competitive point of view it is far more important for a football or hockey team *that* a goal is scored than *how* it is scored. In very many sports of this kind the overriding consideration is the achievement of an external end, since that is the mark of success. In such sports the aesthetic is incidental.

Despite the fact that this non-purposive character of the aesthetic is often pointed out, it is also often misunderstood or not fully understood. Such a misunderstanding would be manifested, for instance, in the commonly supposed consequence that therefore there is no purpose or point in art. The misunderstanding arises from the presupposition that an activity can be said to be of some point or value only if it can be assessed in relation to its success in attaining some purpose external to itself towards which it is directed. Now in cases where such an extrinsic end is the primary consideration, evaluation does depend on it. As we saw above, a painting considered solely as an investment would be evaluated entirely according to its degree of success in achieving maximum capital appreciation. Where the attainment of the end is the overriding consideration the means of attaining it is irrelevant. It would not matter, for instance, what sort of painting it were, or even that it were a painting at all, as long as the end were realized. Similarly, if someone wants to improve the petrol consumption of his car by changing the carburetter, considerations about the particular design of the new one, and the materials from which it is made, are unimportant as long as it succeeds in giving maximum mileage per gallon.

The purpose or point of art cannot be specified in this way, however, though the misapprehension we are now considering stems from the mistaken assumption that the point of an activity *must* somehow be identifiable as an end or purpose apart from the activity itself. Yet where art, or more generally the aesthetic, is concerned the distinction between means and end is inapplicable. Consider, for example, the case of a particular work of art. The question: What is the purpose of that novel? or Why did the novelist write it? can be answered comprehensively only in terms of the novel itself. It might be objected that this is not entirely true, since the purpose of some novels could be given as, for example, exposing certain deleterious social conditions. But such an objection misses the point I am trying to make, for if the purpose is the external

one of exposing those social conditions, then it could equally well, or perhaps better, be realized in other ways, such as the publication of a social survey or a political speech. The report of the social survey is evaluated by reference to its purpose, of effectively conveying the information, whereas this would be irrelevant to the *aesthetic* judgement of a novel. To put the same point another way, from the point of view of efficient conveying of information the precise form and style of writing of the report is of no consequence except in so far as it affects the achievement of that purpose. One report could be as good as another, though the style of writing or compilation was different from, or even inferior to, the other. There could not be a parallel situation in art in which, for example, one poem was said to be as good as another though not so well written. This is, of course, an aspect of the well-known problem of form and content in the arts. To put it briefly, there is a peculiarly intimate connection between the form of an object of aesthetic assessment, i.e. the particular medium of expression, and its content, i.e. what is expressed in it. So that in art there cannot be a change of form of expression without a corresponding change in what is expressed. It is important to recognize that this is a logical point. For even if, in fact, one way of writing the report is the clearest and most efficient, this is only a contingent matter since it is always possible that a better method may be devised; but it is not a contingent matter that the best way of expressing the content of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* is in the particular form of that novel. So that the question becomes: 'What is the purpose of this particular novel, i.e. of this particular *way* of exposing certain aspects of these social conditions?' The end cannot be specified as 'exposing such and such social conditions', but only as 'exposing such and such social conditions in this particular way and no other'. And to give a comprehensive account of what is meant by 'in this particular way and no other' one would have to reproduce nothing less than the whole novel. The end cannot even be identified apart from the manner of achieving it, and that is another way of saying that the presupposition encapsulated in the question, of explanation in terms of purposive action directed on to an external end, is inappropriate in the sphere of aesthetics. In short, there is an important sense in which the answer to 'What is the purpose of that novel?' will amount to a rejection of the question.

A further objection, which has important implications for the aesthetic in sport, might be that in that case how can we criticize a work of art if it can be justified only in terms of itself and there is nothing else with which we can compare it? There is a great deal to be said about the misapprehension that to engage in critical reasoning is necessarily to generalize

(see Bambrough, 1973). It is sufficient for my argument to recognize that an important part of the activity of critical appreciation of art consists in the giving of reasons why particular features contribute so effectively to, or detract from, *this particular* work of art. The important point, for our purposes, is to see again that the end is inseparable from the means of achieving it, for even when one is suggesting an improvement, that improvement is given in terms of the particular work of art in question. Another way of putting this point is to say that *every* feature of a work of art is relevant to the aesthetic assessment of it, whereas when we are judging something as a means to an end, there are irrelevant features of the means, or equally effective alternative means, of achieving the required end. To say that X is an irrelevant feature is always a criticism of a work of art, whereas this is not true of a functional object.

It is true that the aim or end in a sport cannot be considered in isolation from the set of rules or norms of that particular sport. Scoring a goal in football and hockey is not just a matter of getting the ball between the opponents' posts, but requires conformity to the laws of the game. Such requirements are implicit in the use of terms such as 'scoring a goal'. Nevertheless, in contrast to a work of art, within those limits there are many ways of achieving the end, of scoring a goal, in football and hockey.

THE GAP: PURPOSIVE AND AESTHETIC SPORTS

At this point we need to direct our attention to the difference between types of sporting activities with respect to the relative importance of the aesthetic. On the one hand there are those sports, which I shall call 'purposive' and which form the great majority, where the aesthetic is relatively unimportant. This category would include football, climbing, athletics, orienteering and squash. In each of these sports the aim, purpose or end can be specified independently of the manner of achieving it as long as it conforms to the limits set by the rules or norms—for example, scoring a goal and climbing the Eiger. Even in such sports as these, of course, certain moves or movements, indeed whole games or performances, can be considered from the aesthetic point of view; but that is a relatively unimportant aspect of the activity. If we were to ask a hockey player, on the eve of an important match: 'Which would you prefer, to score three goals in a clumsy manner, or to miss them all with graceful movements?' there is little doubt what the answer would be, at least in most cases. In sports such as these the aesthetic aspect is subordinate to the main purpose.

On the other hand there is a category of sports in each of which the

aim cannot be specified in isolation from the aesthetic, for example trampolining, gymnastics, figure skating and diving. I shall call these the 'aesthetic' sports, since they are similar to the arts in that the purpose cannot be considered apart from the manner of achieving it. There is an intrinsic end, one which cannot be identified independently of the means. In formal gymnastics the end is not simply to get over the box, or to turn a somersault if, for example, one were to do so in a clumsy way and collapse afterwards in an uncontrolled manner. It is not incidental, but central, to these sports *how* one performs the appropriate movements. The end cannot be specified, for instance, as 'getting over the box', but only in terms of the way in which this end is to be achieved. Indeed a certain degree of aesthetic evaluation is already built in to terms like 'vault' and 'dive'. To vault over a box is not the same as to jump over it or to get over it somehow or other. 'Vault' incorporates certain implicit aesthetic norms. Moreover, although such terms as 'vault' are not used in modern educational gymnastics, the same issue of principle applies. There is greater flexibility in the possibility of answering a particular task in educational, as compared with more formal gymnastics, yet it still matters a great deal how, aesthetically, the task is answered. Clumsy, uncontrolled movements would not be regarded as an adequate way of answering a task, even allowing for the wider choice of movements available for each task in educational gymnastics. Similarly, not any way of dropping into the water would count as a dive. One would have to satisfy at least to some minimal extent the aesthetic requirement built into the meaning of the term for a performance to count as even a bad dive.

In an interesting article on this topic Reid (1970) distinguishes between what I have called purposive and aesthetic sports in the following way: 'Games come at the end of a kind of spectrum. In most games, competition against an opponent (an individual or team) is assumed. In a wide range of athletics, on the other hand—such as hurdling, flat racing, high or long jumping—competition against others, although part of any total picture of athletics, is not absolutely essential to the activity. In any of these sports one can "compete" for long periods only against oneself. At the other end of the spectrum there are gymnastics, diving, skating . . . in which grace, the *manner* in which the activity is carried out, seems to be of central importance'. But it is difficult to understand this suggestion, for it is not clear what is the element or characteristic the degree of which determines the position of various sports on such a spectrum. If the supposed characteristic is competitiveness, then there does not seem to be even a distinction here, let alone a spectrum, for competition in

Olympic gymnastics, trampolining, skating and diving can be every bit as keen as it is in Rugby football. Reid appears to be adopting the commonly encountered practice of contrasting the competitive with the aesthetic, but to take a paradigm example there are even competitive music festivals. If on the other hand Reid were thinking of the differences between sports with respect to the relative ineliminability of the aesthetic, then there is a distinction, but hardly a spectrum. As we have seen, there are sports whose purpose can be stated in terms which carry no implications as to the manner of achievement, and there are sports in which the purpose of the activity will inevitably incorporate aesthetic evaluation of the means of achieving it. I can think of only one sport which would qualify for a central position on a spectrum, namely ski jumping, in which points are awarded both for length and for style so that the skier who produces the longest jump does not necessarily win the competition. But one such sport is not enough to provide a spectrum, though this almost total lack of 'mixed' sports is, of course, a contingent matter. One can imagine a game in which, for instance, points are awarded for a goal, and further points are awarded if it was scored in an aesthetically pleasing manner. So that one competitor could 'win' (in our present sense) a high jump, boat race or cricket match, yet lose because the manner of achievement was inferior. Such a situation, in which different sports varied with respect to the relative importance of the aesthetic, *would* give a spectrum. It may be a pity that we do not have more sports of this sort—and perhaps one might take the liberty of commending the idea to physical educationists interested in the aesthetic who may consider devising new sports or modifying old ones. It would provide even greater variety to the growing range of sporting activities, and would specifically cater for the increasing interest in the aesthetic. Nevertheless, at present, to the best of my knowledge there is only one candidate for an intermediate position, and that would seem to be insufficient to uphold the notion of a spectrum.

CLOSING THE GAP

We can now return to the original question concerning the characterization of the aesthetic way of looking at sport. By examining the paradigm cases of sports in which the aesthetic is inseparable from what the performer is trying to achieve we might hope to discover aspects of our way of considering them which can be found to apply even to purposive sports when they are looked at aesthetically.

In figure skating, diving, trampolining and Olympic gymnastics it is of the first importance that there should be no wasted energy, no

superfluous movements. Champion gymnasts like Olga Korbutt and Ludmilla Tourischeva not only perform striking physical feats, but do so with such remarkable economy and efficiency of effort that it sometimes looks effortless. There is an intensive concentration of the gymnast's effort so that it is all directed precisely and concisely on to that specific task. Any irrelevant movement or excessive expenditure of energy would detract from the quality of the performance as a whole, just as superfluous or exaggerated words, words which fail to contribute with maximum compression of meaning to the total effect, detract from the quality of a poem as a whole.

However, even in the case of the aesthetic sports there is still, though no doubt to a very limited extent, an externally identifiable aim: for example the requirements set by each particular movement and by the particular group of movements in gymnastics. Now it might be thought that it would be justifiable to regard such stringencies as analogous to, say, the form of a sonnet. That is, it may be thought more appropriate to regard them as setting a framework within which the performer has the opportunity to reveal his expertise in moving gracefully than as an externally identifiable aim. There is certainly something in this notion, but it is significant that there is no analogy in aesthetic sports with poetic licence. The poet may take liberties with the sonnet form without necessarily detracting from the quality of the sonnet, but if the gymnast deviates from the requirements of, say, a vault, however gracefully, then that inevitably detracts from the standard of the performance. Nevertheless the main point for our purposes is that even if in the aesthetic sports the means never quite reaches the ultimate of complete identification with the end which is such an important distinguishing feature of the concept of art, it at least closely approximates to such an identification. The gap between means and end is almost, if not quite, completely closed.

Now I want to suggest that the same consideration applies to our aesthetic appreciation of sports of the purposive kind. However successful a sportsman may be in achieving the principal aim of his particular activity, our *aesthetic* acclaim is reserved for him who achieves it with maximum economy and efficiency of effort. We may admire the remarkable stamina and consistent success of an athlete such as Zatopek, but he was not an aesthetically attractive runner because so much of his movement seemed irrelevant to the ideal of most direct accomplishment of the task. His style was regarded as ungainly because there were extraneous waggles, rolls or jerks which seemed wasteful in that they were not concisely aimed at achieving the most efficient use of his energy.

So to consider the purposive sports from the aesthetic point of view

is to reduce the gap between means and end. From a purely purposive point of view any way of winning, within the rules, will do, whereas not *any* way of winning will do as far as aesthetic considerations are concerned. There is a narrower range of possibilities available for the achievement of the end in an aesthetically pleasing way, since the end is no longer simply to win, but to win with the greatest economy and efficiency of effort. Nevertheless the highest aesthetic satisfaction is experienced and given by the sportsman who not only performs with graceful economy but who also *achieves* his purpose. The tennis player who serves a clean ace with impeccable style has, and gives to the spectator, far more aesthetic satisfaction than when he fractionally faults with an equally impeccable style. In the case of the purposive sports there is an objectively specifiable framework, i.e. one which does not require the sort of judgement to assess achievement which is necessary in the aesthetic sports. Maximum aesthetic success still requires the attainment of the end, and the aesthetic in any degree requires direction on to that end; but the number of ways of achieving such success is reduced in comparison with the purely purposive interest of simply accomplishing the end in an externally specifiable sense.

CONTEXT AND AESTHETIC FEELING

This raises two related points. First, movement cannot be considered aesthetically in isolation, but only in the context of a particular action in a particular sport. A graceful sweep of the left arm may be very effective in a dance, but the same movement may look ugly and absurd as part of a service action in tennis or of a bowler's action in cricket, since it detracts from the ideal of total concentration of effort to achieve the specific task. A specific movement is aesthetically satisfying only if in the context of the action as a whole it is seen as forming a unified structure which is regarded as the most economical and efficient method of achieving the required end.

Second, there is a danger of serious misconception arising from a mistaken dependence upon feelings as criteria of aesthetic quality whether in sport or in any other activity, including dance and the other arts. The misconception is to take the feeling of the performer, or spectator, as the ultimate arbiter. But such a feeling is intelligible only if it can be identified by observable phenomena. This is part of what Wittgenstein (1963) meant by saying that an inner process stands in need of outward criteria. It is the observable physical movement which identifies the feeling and not, as is often believed, the inner feeling which suffuses the physical movement with aesthetic quality or meaning. That is, the feeling could

not even be understood as a feeling, still less as the specific feeling it is, if it were not experienced in a certain set of empirically recognizable circumstances. We should resist the temptation, commonly encountered in discussion of dance and other forms of movement, to believe that it is how a movement feels which determines its effectiveness, whether aesthetic or purposive. That it feels right is no guarantee that it is right. Inexperienced oarsmen in an 'eight' are often tempted to heave their bodies round violently in an attempt to propel the boat more quickly, because such an action gives a feeling of much greater power. But in fact it will upset the balance of the boat and thus reduce the effectiveness of the rowing of the crew as a whole. The most effective stroke action can best be judged by the coach who is watching the whole performance from the bank, not by the feeling of the individual oarsmen or even by that of all the crew. Similarly in tennis and skiing, to take just two examples, the feeling of an action is often misleading as to its maximum efficiency. A common error in skiing is to lean into the slope and at a certain stage in his progress a learner starts to make turns for the first time which feel very good. Yet however exhilarating the feeling, if he is leaning the wrong way he will be considerably hampered from making further progress because in fact he is not directing his effort in the most effective way. There are innumerable other such examples one could cite, and this of course has important implications for education. If the arbiter of success in physical activities is what the students feel, rather than what they can be observed to do, it is hard to see how such activities can be learned and taught.

It is important, however, not to misunderstand this point by going to the opposite extreme, for I am not saying that we cannot be guided by such feelings or that they are of no value. My point is that they are useful and reliable only to the extent that they are answerable to patterns of behaviour which can be *observed* to be most efficiently directed on to the particular task. This reveals the connection between this and the preceding point, for it is clear that the character and efficiency of a particular movement cannot be considered in isolation from the whole set of related movements of which it forms a part and from the purpose towards which they are, as a whole, directed. Thus the context in which the movement occurs is a factor of an importance which it is impossible to exaggerate, since the feeling could not even be understood, let alone evaluated, if it were not normally experienced as part of an empirically recognizable action.

In this respect I should like to question what is often said about the aesthetic attitude, namely that it is essentially or predominantly con-

templative. Reid (*op. cit.*, p. 248), for instance, says: 'In an aesthetic situation we attend to what we perceive in what is sometimes called a "contemplative" way.' Now it may be that a concern with the arts and the aesthetic is largely, or even for the most part, contemplative; but I see no reason to deny, indeed I see good reason to insist, that one can have what are most appropriately called aesthetic *feelings* while actually performing an activity, as long as it is clear that the criterion is answerability to an empirically observable context. A perfect smash in tennis, a well-executed dive, a finely timed stroke in squash, a smoothly accomplished series of movements in gymnastics, an outing in an 'eight' when the whole crew is pulling in unison with unwavering balance, a training run when one's body seems to be completely under one's control, and there are many other examples—for many who engage in sport the feelings derived from such performances are part of the enjoyment of participation in these activities. And 'aesthetic' seems the most appropriate way to characterize such feelings. Reid says (*op. cit.*, p. 252): '. . . a dancer or actor in the full activity of dancing or acting is often, perhaps always, in some degree contemplating the product of his activity.' And later (p. 252), of games players: 'There is no time whilst the operation is going on to dwell upon aesthetic qualities. . . . Afterwards, the participant may look back upon his experience contemplatively with perhaps some aesthetic satisfaction.' Again (p. 254), of the aesthetic in cricket: 'The batsman may enjoy it too, although at the moment of play he has no time to dwell upon it. But to produce exquisite strokes for contemplation is not part of his dominating motive as he is actually engaged in the game. . . .' Yet the batsman's aesthetic experience is not necessarily dependent upon his having time, at the moment of playing the stroke, to 'dwell upon it', nor is it limited to a retrospective contemplation of his performance. If he plays a perfectly timed cover drive, with the ball flashing smoothly and apparently effortlessly from the face of his bat to the boundary, the aesthetic satisfaction of the batsman is intrinsic to what he is doing. The aesthetic is not a distinct but perhaps concurrent activity, and it need not depend upon detached or retrospective contemplation. His experience is inseparable from the stroke he is playing, since it is identifiable only by the way in which he is performing. His particular action, in that context, is a criterion of his feeling, and it is quite natural, unexceptionable and perhaps unavoidable, to call such feelings 'aesthetic'. 'Kinaesthetic' or 'tactile' would not tell the whole story by any means, since producing the same physical movement in other circumstances, say in a laboratory, would not produce the same feeling. Indeed it is significant that we tend naturally to employ aesthetic terms to describe

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the feelings involved in such actions. We say that a stroke felt 'beautiful', and it was so to the extent that it was efficiently executed in relation to the specific purpose of the action in the spor· concerned. Many participants in physical activites have experienced the exquisite feeling of, for instance, performing a dance or gymnastic sequence, of sailing over the bar in a pole vault, and of accomplishing a fluent series of Christis with skis immaculately parallel. It is difficult to know how to describe these feelings other than as 'aesthetic'. It is certainly the way in which those of us who have taken part in such activities tend spontaneously to refer to them. So, though I do not wish to deny that contemplation is an important part of the aesthetic, I would suggest that it is not exhaustive. It is by no means unusual to experience aesthetic feelings, properly so called, while actually engaged and fully involved in physical activities.

THE AESTHETIC IN THE FUNCTIONAL

This characteristic of the aesthetic in activities which are primarily functional can be seen to apply to the apparently bizarre examples cited earlier of mathematical proofs and philosophical arguments. The proof of a theorem in Euclidean geometry, or a philosophical argument, is aesthetically pleasing when there is a cleanly, sharply and totally directed focus of effort. Any over-elaborate, irrelevant or repetitious section, in either case, would detract from the maximum economy in achieving the conclusion which is a requirement for maximum aesthetic satisfaction. Again the context is crucial. Rhetorical flourishes, however aesthetically impressive in other contexts, as for example a political speech, detract aesthetically from a philosophical argument by fussily blurring the ideal of a clean line of totally focused direction on to the conclusion. The aesthetic satisfaction given by rhetoric in a political speech is related to the latter's different purpose of producing a convincing or winning argument rather than a valid one.

The same characteristic of the aesthetic can be seen to apply, to some extent, to objects which are considered primarily from a functional point of view. For example our aesthetic evaluation of the shape of a car is at least partly related to what we take to be its contribution to optimum efficiency of function—for instance by reducing wind resistance. Of course there are other aspects, such as colour and embellishments, which may contribute to aesthetic effect while being irrelevant to efficiency of function, but even these are unlikely to be highly regarded aesthetically if they actually detract from the achievement of the primary purpose of the car.

The aesthetic pleasure which we derive from sporting events of the

purposive kind, such as hurdling and putting the shot, is, then, derived from looking at, or performing, actions which we take to be approaching the ideal of totally concise direction towards the required end of the particular activity. Skiing provides a good example. The stylish skier seems to float, his body automatically accommodating itself, apparently without conscious effort on his part, to the most appropriate and efficient positions for the various types and conditions of terrain. By contrast the skiing in a slalom race often appears ungainly because it seems to be unnecessarily forced. The skier in such an event achieves greater speed, but only by the expenditure of a disproportionate amount of additional effort. Similarly athletes at the end of a distance race often abandon the smooth, economical style with which they have run the greater part of the race. They achieve greater speed but at disproportionate cost, since irrelevant movements appear—the head rolls, the body lurches, etc. In rowing, too, some oarsmen can produce a higher speed with poor style but more, if less effectively produced, power. Even though it is wasteful, the net effective power may still be greater than that of the oarsman who directs his more limited gross power with far more efficiency. It is often said that a good big 'un will beat a good little 'un. It is also true in many sports, unfortunately in my view, that a poor big 'un may well beat a far better little 'un.

Perhaps these considerations do something to explain the heightened aesthetic awareness which is achieved by watching slow-motion films and television replays, since (*a*) we have more time to appreciate the manner of the performance, and (*b*) the object of the action, the purpose, in an extrinsic sense, becomes less important. That is, our attention is directed more to the character of the action than to its result. We can see whether and how every detail of every movement in the action as a whole contributes to making it the most efficient and economical way of accomplishing that particular purpose. A smooth, flowing style is more highly regarded aesthetically because it appears to require less effort for the same result than a jerky one. Nevertheless, as we mentioned above, achievement of the purpose is still important. However graceful and superbly directed the movements of a pole-vaulter, our aesthetic pleasure in his performance is marred if he knocks the bar off.

Several questions remain. For example, why do we regard some events as less aesthetically pleasing than others, i.e. where we are not comparing actions within the same context of direction on to a common end but comparing actions in different contexts? For instance, in my view the butterfly stroke in swimming, however well performed, seems less aesthetically pleasing than the crawl. Perhaps this is because it looks less

efficient as a way of moving through the water, since there appears to be a disproportionate expenditure of effort in relation to the achievement. A similar example is race walking, which even at its best never seems to me to be an aesthetically pleasing event. Perhaps, again, this is because one feels that the same effort would be more efficiently employed if the walker broke into a run. In each of these cases one is implicitly setting a wider context, seeing the action in terms of a wider purpose, of movement through water and movement over the ground respectively. But what of a sport such as weight lifting, which many regard as providing little or no aesthetic pleasure, though it is hard to discover a wider context, a more economical direction on to a wider or similar end in another activity with which we are implicitly comparing it? Perhaps the explanation lies simply in a general tendency to prefer, from an aesthetic point of view, sports which allow for smooth, flowing movements in the achievement of the primary purpose. Nevertheless, for the devotee, there are no doubt 'beautiful' lifts, so called because they accomplish maximum direction of effort.

ARE THE AESTHETIC SPORTS ART?

In the case of the purposive sports, then, as the actions become more and more directly aimed with maximum economy and efficiency at the required end, they become more and more specific and the gap between means and end is to that extent reduced. That is, increasingly it is less possible to specify the means apart from the end. In these sports the gap will nevertheless never be entirely closed—there cannot be the complete identification of means and end or, more accurately perhaps, the inappropriateness of the distinction between means and end which obtains in the case of art. For even if in fact there is a single most efficient and economical way of achieving a particular end, this is a contingent matter. The evolution of improved high jumping methods is a good example. The scissor jump was once regarded as the most efficient method, but it has been overtaken by the straddle, the Western roll and the Fosbury flop.

But what of the aesthetic sports? Can they justifiably claim to be art forms? I am inclined to give a negative answer, for two reasons. First, as we have seen, there is good reason to doubt whether the means/end distinction ever quite becomes inappropriate, though it almost reaches that point, even in the aesthetic sports. That is, unlike dance, in these sports there is still an externally specifiable aim even though, for instance, it is very difficult to specify what the gymnast is trying to achieve apart from the way in which he is trying to achieve it. Perhaps this is what some physical educationists are getting at when they say, rather vaguely, that a

distinction between gymnastics and dance is that the former is objective while the latter is subjective.

It is the second reason, however, which seems to me the more important one, and this concerns the distinction which seems to be almost universally ignored, or over simplified and therefore misconceived, between the aesthetic and the artistic. The aesthetic applies, for instance, to sunsets, bird song and mountain ranges, whereas the artistic is limited, at least in its central uses, to artefacts or performances intentionally created by man—*objets trouvés*, if they are accepted as art, would be so in an extended sense. Throughout this paper I have so far followed the common practice of using 'aesthetic' as a broad generic term of which the artistic is a species. My reason for doing so is that the difference between the two terms is of no consequence to my main argument, since their logical character, with respect to the possibility of distinguishing between means and end, is the same. However, when we are discussing the question whether sport can justifiably be regarded as an art form the distinction becomes crucial. This issue seems to me to be a big one, which would take us too far afield to examine in the detail it merits, i.e. in relation to the arts generally; but it will be sufficient here to restrict our attention to the art form most closely related to our present enquiry, namely dance. It seems to me that there are cases where one may appreciate a dance performance aesthetically without appreciating it artistically. Some years ago I went to watch a performance by Ram Gopal, the great Indian classical dancer, and I was quite enthralled by the exhilarating quality of his movements. Yet I did not appreciate, because I could not have understood, his dance artistically, for there is an enormous number of precise meanings given to hand gestures in Indian classical dance, of which I knew none. So it seems clear that my appreciation was of the aesthetic not the artistic.

Reid is prepared to allow that what I call the aesthetic sports may justifiably be called art, but I suggest that he reaches this conclusion as a result of failing sufficiently to recognise the importance to that question of this aspect of the difference between the two concepts. For example, he says (*op. cit.*, p. 249): 'When we are talking about the category of art, as distinct from the category of the aesthetic, we must be firm, I think, in insisting that in art there is someone who has made (or is making) purposefully an artifact, and that in his purpose there is contained as an essential part the idea of producing an object (not necessarily a "thing": it could be a movement or a piece of music) in some medium for aesthetic contemplation.' Again (p. 258): '. . . the movement (of a gymnast, skater, diver), carried out in accordance with the general formula, has aesthetic quality fused into it, transforming it into an art quality. . . .' And again (*loc. cit.*):

'The question is whether the production of aesthetic value is intrinsically part of the purpose of these sports. (If so, on my assumptions, they will be in part, at least, art.)' According to Reid, then, the artistic is that which is intentionally created or performed for its aesthetic value. But I want to suggest that this overlooks the important factor in the distinction between the two concepts which is implicit in my example of Indian dance. In any art form, to put it roughly, there is at least the possibility of a close involvement with life situations—for example, the arts characteristically concern themselves with contemporary moral, social, political and emotional issues. Yet this is not true of the aesthetic, even if the object under consideration has been created for an aesthetic purpose. For example, a wallpaper pattern is normally designed to give aesthetic pleasure but I would not on that account, at least in the great majority of cases, want to call it artistic. To relate this to our present enquiry: it seems to me that even in those sports in which the aesthetic is intrinsic, and which are therefore intentionally performed to give aesthetic satisfaction, we cannot justifiably call them art forms. For in skating, diving, trampolining and gymnastics the performer does not have the possibility of expressing through his particular medium his view of life situations. It is difficult to imagine a gymnast who included in his sequence movements which expressed his view of war, or of love, or of any other such issue. Certainly if he did so it would, unlike art, *detract* to that extent from his performance.

Of course this is inadequate as an examination of the difference between the aesthetic and the artistic, but I think it points to an aspect of that difference which would repay further thought. There are difficult cases, even in the accredited arts, such as 'abstract' paintings and dances, where we are urged not to look for a meaning but simply to enjoy the line, colour, movement, etc., without trying to read anything into it. But it does seem to me that an art form, properly so called, must at least allow for the possibility of the artist's comment, through his art, on life situations and this is not possible in diving, skating, trampolining and gymnastics. Incidentally, if I am right, this may pose problems for those who suggest that these aesthetic sports may provide one method of, perhaps an introduction to, education in the arts, though of course this is not in the least to cast doubt on their aesthetic value. Superb aesthetically, at their best, these sports undoubtedly are; but they are not, in my view, art.

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MUSIC AND ITS LOGIC

Frederick E. Taylor

THE ASSOCIATION between logic and aesthetic judgement was first rather cautiously made by Edmund Burke. He writes:

> And after all, if men differ in their opinion concerning such matters (aesthetic judgements), their difference is not attended with the same important consequences (as that of pure reason or empirical facts), else I make no doubt but that the logic of Taste, if I may be allowed the expression, might very possibly be as well digested, and we might come to discuss matters of this nature with as much certainty, as those which seem more immediately within the province of mere reason.[1]

Since the time of Burke's treatise the notion of logic in art has frequently been 'allowed', and particularly so with regard to musical composition, in which the phrase 'logic of music' or 'musical logic' has worked its way into the everyday parlance of musicologists, theorists and musicians alike. Intuitively one feels this vague expression serves its purpose in analysis; indeed music is a temporal arrangement of sounds in which it may be felt that groups of sounds follow naturally from others. This view, that organization in music is very much dependent upon certain inevitable laws and fixed principles innately perceived, has been most notably challenged by Meyer.[2] In a quasi-behaviouristic manner he argues that the content of any work is primarily dependent upon the listener's conditioned preparedness and response. It is my contention to the contrary that meaning and value in music are greatly determined by certain universal and necessary properties and that while we must agree that a familiarity with the music of an individual culture, period or composer plays its part in musical understanding, this role is neither a sufficient nor a necessary prerequisite for one's comprehension of a great portion of the meaning of any work.

It is by an examination of the logic of music, I further maintain, that a more thorough understanding of organization in music and our comprehension of this organization shall be found. Musical logic is not a simple thing, and in the space this article permits the most we can hope for is an

outline of the direction a more comprehensive theory would take. But we can here make a survey of the various notions involved in musical logic, including musical axioms, rules of inference and derivations. Schönberg believed that 'in music, there is no form without logic, there is no logic without unity'.[3] I should add that there is no appreciation or understanding either. With this claim as our goal let us begin our analysis with the definition of a few terms.

Any musical work is composed of sounds and relations between sounds. Sounds are related horizontally or vertically, that is simultaneously or in succession. Examples of sets of sounds horizontally grouped are phrases, phrase units, themes, etc., and I shall refer to a complete or partial representation of any such unified set as a sound segment. A five-note phrase unit would thus count as a sound segment; this phrase unit coupled with a second to form a complete phrase would constitute another sound segment. Still another would be formed by a reintroduction of any part of this phrase. Examples of sets of sounds vertically grouped are simple intervals, chords and tone clusters. A sound segment is therefore most often a horizontal arrangement of vertically related groups of sounds—exceptions being independent monophonic voice lines.

Insights into how sounds and sound segments are related have been presented by Meyer, and as I believe his work is familiar to most I shall only summarize what he has said pertinent to our discussion. Meyer maintains that the particular organization of sounds in any work is not due to any universal or natural property of music but is culturally determined. To what extent Meyer believes organization in music is learned is not exactly clear We will return to this below, but for the moment it is important to recognize that at least some relations are due to unique factors in a particular culture, era or style. Complete understanding in music is therefore at least partially a result of a conditioned and learned response. The Western listener, for example, learns that a harmonic progression commencing with a I–IV–V chordal pattern is strongly related (horizontally) to a concluding I chord. The listener expects to hear this final I chord, and in this sense we may say that a set of sounds implies another. In like manner one develops, through repeated hearings, expectations in form and rhythm. A transition or bridge is expected to follow the first theme in sonata allegro form; so, too, once a rhythm is established a continuity is expected.

Resolution in music is seen as a fulfilment of one's expectations, but it is often the case that expectations are not immediately resolved. In these instances fulfilment is momentarily delayed as a result of the composer's having deviated from the patterns to which we are accustomed.

> Ambiguity arises either because the progressions involved in a passage are so consistently irregular and unexpected that the listener begins to doubt the relevance and efficacy of his own expectations or because the shapes of the sound terms are so weak and uniform that there is only a minimal basis for expectation. This feeling is one of suspense and ambiguity.[4]

This sort of suspense is what the composer builds up and finally resolves. In ambiguous moments, we enter a period of ignorance; we suspend judgement as to what will follow; but finally it is necessary that what does follow is not ambiguous and that it does correspond to our abilities to comprehend. 'The experience of suspense is aesthetically valueless unless it is followed by a release which is understandable in a given context.'[5]

With Meyer's thesis in mind let us now examine the nature of musical logic. We will begin by defining two rules of inference, the first of which involves the notion of musical expectation. A particular group or sequence of sounds implies another when the feeling of expectation or anticipation is induced in the listener. The sound or set of sounds which resolves this expectation is said to be a derivation from the initial stimulus. Many times the listener may not expect a definite resolution but a variety of sounds and shapes of sound any of which is sufficient to satisfy the feeling of expectation. Because any of these will adequately serve as a resolution each also must count as a derivation. We must not think that because a composer has chosen a set of axioms and rules of inference the direction his music will take is therefore determined any more than we believe that a logician presented with a set of formal axioms and rules of inference is thereby regulated to deduce a prescribed order of theorems.[6] As in formal logic, the necessity involved is not a forward direction but a backward one by which any derivation (theorem) can, by using various rules of inference, be traced back logically to the axioms. What is musically logical is what makes sense, what proceeds expectedly and without surprise; what is illogical and underivable is what is unexpected and unfamiliar.[7]

Derivation in music may also be made by similarity of sound. The best argument for this rule comes from musicians themselves, who speak of variations, development, imitation and improvisation. Each such analytic term implies a process whereby the composer has used the substance of old material to create new. We want the definition of this rule of inference to include this intuitive notion, but to make it exact we shall see that derivations by similarity involve more than one might first suppose. In each of the above instances, similarity occurs as a result of at least one aspect (melody, harmony, rhythm) of the former sound segment being retained or repeated in the latter. Normally a retention of thematic or harmonic structure will come to mind, but we must also observe that two

or more sounds may retain the same instrumentation, tonality, vertical relations, metre, or any other aspect of a musical sound. Similarity is, then, a relation between two or more sounds or sound segments in which at least one aspect of sound is retained in each. And a derivation by similarity is simply any set of sounds which is considered similar to another (i.e. from that which it is derived). A few examples may help to clarify. A series of chords with or without added sevenths, ninths, etc., are all derived from the first when each retains the same triadic vertical relation; each measure of a passage is (metrically) derived from the first if each is heard in the same metre; an ornamentation of a theme is a (thematic) derivation from the theme if each retains the identical thematic structure; and an improvisation on a set of chord changes is a (harmonic) derivation if the same harmonic progression is utilized.

Regarding both rules of inference it should be noted that implication in music is normally a horizontal relation. This seems clear in the case of expectation, for it is difficult to imagine how a feeling of expectation and resolution from that expectation could occur simultaneously. But in the case of similarity, two or more simultaneously occurring sound segments may be heard as a derivation from a single sound segment. For example, two different rhythms in the same metre may possess this property. Usually, however, sound segments occurring in the same time interval will be heard as parts of the same sound segment, for example a sequence of parallel fifths, or as two or more distinct sound segments, for example individual voices in counterpoint.

With the concept of derivation defined, it is now possible to explain what we mean by a musical axiom for we shall define an axiom as any sound or group of sounds which is not a derivation. There are two types of axioms. The first, general or external axioms, are abstract relations of sounds found in many works of a particular style or period which when coupled with a musical rule of inference imply a proceeding set of sounds. With respect to expectation, when a listener senses that what is being heard must be resolved (rhythmically, tonally, formally, etc.) an axiom of this sort has been established. For example the sounds of a transition section within a sonata form taken as a whole are so related, by a lack of any clear tonality or melodic idea, as to form a general axiom. For any listener acquainted with the sonata form a formal rule of inference (expectation) is applied the derivation (resolution) of which is a thematic idea. Also, within the transition section, there may occur a circle of fifths. Here the tonic-dominant relation acting as a general axiom is used repeatedly. Again, most Western listeners apply a harmonic rule of inference (expectation) the derivation of which is a tonic sound or group of sounds.

In addition, each succeeding tonic-dominant relation retains the same harmonic relation and is hence derived (by similarity) from the first. By employing the two rules of inference, therefore, the entire transition section is seen to follow from a single musical axiom.

The second class of axioms, particular or internal axioms, are in no way dependent upon any specific relations of sounds as they form the unique relations (vertical or horizontal) of any specific work. They thus comprise the subject matter of themes, motifs, tone rows and rhythms as well as, though rare, particular vertical relations. Unlike general axioms they are seldom used in more than one work, and derivations are thus independent of the listener's conditioning and learned musical knowledge. Any group of variations on a theme provides us with an example. Here the particular axiom is the thematic sound segment, and by virtue of a repetition in the harmonic structure (a repetition in another aspect of this sound segment is, of course, also possible) each variation is seen as a sound segment derived from the particular axiom.[8]

It may appear that by our definitions little in any composition cannot be derived in some way. This is in fact correct, and we have here verification of at least some degree of logical unity in nearly all works. However, it is important to note variances in unity among works and to make distinctions in the different levels and degrees of derivation. The different levels of derivation correspond to the different aspects of sound segments (i.e. melody, harmony, rhythm, etc.), while the degrees of derivation, ranging from weak to strong, vary with respect to these levels. Melodic and harmonic derivations are perhaps the strongest, and those of instrumentation and form are probably felt to be the weakest. Moreover when a sound segment is derived from more than one axiom, as for example in the case of a recapitulation which is derived from an expectation in form in addition to its thematic, harmonic and rhythmic similarity, it will normally be heard as a stronger derivation than if derived from fewer axioms.

Let us now turn to a logical property of music, namely consistency. Although works vary with respect to unity, it must be said that inconsistency in musical composition is rare. The human mind seems to possess a potential for finding virtually any two musical ideas non-incompatible. In visual art Helmut Hungerland, in showing what might initially be thought to be an inconsistent picture (a classical portrait of George Washinton's family superimposed upon a contemporary abstract background) to art students, found that 'with few exceptions a reformalization of expectation or adjustment to a new kind of apperceived structure was possible; it was possible to develop a new notion of consistency—a

consistency relevant to a new kind of picture'.[9] In music Charles Ives comes to mind, who as a boy heard and organized not simply the music of one band as it paraded by but the clashing sounds of two or three. These sounds later became general axioms in his works, forming new and different implications. 'It would seem to follow', writes Hungerland, 'that increasing familiarity with new styles in art modifies previously held expectations or gives rise to new sets of expectations which are relevant to a new kind of art in question.'[10]

It seems, then, that what may first be thought an inconsistent set of sounds resulting from unexpected resolutions or vertical relations is, at least in some instances, due simply to the listener's unfamiliarity with a particular work's axioms and derivations by expectation. But are these derivations sufficient in themselves to unify a work? To answer this let us imagine what an inconsistent composition might be like. Suppose we were to pick at random a dozen or so recordings of various kinds of music and again randomly tape short segments of unrelated time intervals from each and then combine them to form a whole. I think we can conclude that the result would be an inconsistent group of sounds. Only by coincidence would one sound segment be derived from another by similarity and if so, probably weakly. Also, owing to repeated interruptions the rules of inference applied would seldom lead to expected resolutions. That is, succeeding sound segments would not be derived from earlier ones but heard as an incompatible set of axioms.

It may be argued at this point that we are applying incorrect rules of inference. We as listeners accustomed to, say, Western or Eastern music might be forming incorrect expectations when axioms are presented, and what is heard as wrong and strange by most listeners would be heard as a correct and meaningful arrangement of sounds by one duly conditioned and knowledgeable. But if this be the case, it must be admitted that the work in question would proceed with limited suspense, tension and surprise. It would in fact inspire little if any excitement or emotion, for those expectations (if any) which were felt would either be almost immediately resolved or not resolved at all. Each sound segment might, if experienced often enough, be heard to follow naturally from the one before it; but then deviations would not occur, for understanding such a 'natural' and clear organization would be a result of memorization and a conditioned expectation. That is to say, if we grant, theoretically at least, that it might be possible for some unexperienced and unconditioned listener to unify this work by applying correct rules of inference, then it shall be difficult to maintain that such a routine sequence of sounds is music at all.

This leads us to conclude that a sufficient number of derivations by similarity is necessary for consistency. But what shall count as sufficient? Let us first note that we certainly do not hear the particular axioms in most works as inconsistent. For example, two contrasting themes within a single movement, though underivable from each other owing to their unique horizontal relations, are not in most cases heard as two incompatible axioms. However, the horizontal relations of a particular axiom are but one aspect of a work; and it is, of course, quite possible for derivations to occur between sounds owing for example to the work's tonality, vertical relations or rhythm. What aspects are sufficient to unify a work will depend upon the strength of the derivation. I do not think that we can say that our hypothetical construction would sound consistent if only each passage were played in the same key or by the same group of instruments. Nor is it normally sufficient for a work simply to be tonal or to employ the same metre throughout. It is usually the case that derivations involving a number of aspects are needed sufficiently to unify a work. We can say, therefore, that while derivations by similarity are necessary for consistency, there appears to be no single sufficient aspect of musical sounds from which this similarity will arise.

Now in order to determine if an actual composition is consistent it is only necessary that we find one interpretation of the work's axioms which causes the various passages and sound segments to be heard as a meaningful and unified whole. As an example let us consider Chopin's Piano Sonata in B♭ Minor—a work which has always seemed to incite explanation by musicians as to its meaning. Within movements this work is frequented by abrupt changes and contrasting themes, and it is arguable that there is insufficient similarity for unification here. But the logic of the last movement is indeed questionable. Retaining little more than the same instrumentation and key from the previous movements, the Presto seems to be structured around general axioms of another period. Repeated use of intervals of a second, fourth and fifth; the rapid and constant triplets; and the lack of solid tonality all resemble axioms of late Impressionism. But while the logic here may be puzzling and ambiguous for some, I do not believe it is so weak as to be compared with our hypothetical inconsistent composition. And therefore it is not altogether surprising to discover a meaningful interpretation by Theodor Kullack in some explanatory remarks to a nineteenth-century edition of the sonata. For this analyst the Finale expresses an 'Autumn-wind whirling away the withered leaves over a fresh grave'. When seen in this light it is concluded that 'no one will fail to perceive the logic of its connection with the Funeral March'. Of course it is quite possible that one will make such

a meaningful connection when this or any similar interpretation is made. But the question is whether we can reasonably expect the listener to interpret the movement in just this manner. Indeed Schumann saw 'a sphinx with a mocking smile' and others simply hear 'two hands gossiping together'. And while there are certainly variances in performance, it defies the imagination to conceive of a performance which would always bring to mind Kullack's imagery.

What we must conclude, then, is that, unlike our imaginary composition, this Chopin sonata is consistent, as the particular arrangement of sounds provides for at least one coherent interpretation. However, there is no reason to suppose that such a unified and significant hearing will be formed under *all* interpretations, and if meaning in music is to be that which we expect others ought to perceive (to employ a Kantian argument), this criterion is esential. What will provide for this is a sufficiently strong logic. For what we may justifiably expect of any listener are the musical inferences he draws from a work's axioms and derivation rules. That is to say though the content or interpretation of a work's sound segments may vary among listeners, the relations between these sound segments will not. If on the other hand a work is merely consistent, the derivations may be so weak and irregular that even though the logic is comprehended, the meaning is unclear.

Thus far we have discussed the nature of musical axioms, derivations and inconsistency in music. We have done this in part by reformulating Meyer's analysis of musical expectation and resolution. But Meyer has also made a good case for the notion of ambiguity, and if the logic of music is to be more than just a metaphorical phrase, ambiguity must also be defined in terms of musical logic.[11]

As noted, Meyer defines ambiguity as a deviation in the listener's expectations causing him to question the relevance of what he is hearing. Since what is expected to follow from a musical stimulus is not necessarily determined, the relation here is only probable. Let us point out that if music did not contain probability in this sense, it would indeed be dull. A work which lacks a creative impulse and relies on a period's general axioms and a simple and clear logic is the work of a machine. One is well aware that Gossec did not really compose some thirty-odd symphonies; he composed one symphony in more than thirty ways. Musical composition to the contrary depends so much on particular axioms and subtleties in its logic that knowing the 'rules of the game' can never suffice for artistic expression.

Now ambiguity is a result of such subtleties and complexities, for the suspense and anxiety induced are a consequence of the listener's inability

to relate and make sense of a particular passage or phrase—he momentarily questions the work's logic. This may result in one of two ways: from a weakening in the work's logic whereby the ambiguous segment, taken as a whole, both does and does not seem to be derived from any previous sound segment; or when the logic within the music becomes so intricate and complex that it is dificult for the listener to follow. As an example of a weakening in a work's logic let us suppose that instead of a I–IV–V harmonic sequence immediately resolving (in which case the logic is strong and ambiguity does not occur) a VI–V–I sequence is heard. Being unexpected,[12] the VI chord seems musically illogical; however, it may be similar to the V (and I and IV) chord if both maintain the same instrumentation, metric pulse and vertical relations. And by being similar in varying degrees the VI chord is derived from previous sounds. The sense of ambiguity then results because it is felt that the VI chord both does and does not follow logically. Finally, when the I chord is heard (presuming this is the correct resolution) the logic is clear, the tension released and the ambiguity ceases.

Let us suppose a slightly different example in which the above I–IV–V progression, instead of being followed by a VI chord, modulates to a new key. Here the expectation is never resolved and the problem of progressing from one tonality to another, while at the same time maintaining at least some degree of continuity, is one which confronts the composer. The vast number of means by which composers attempt to change keys smoothly is evidence of derivations by similarity and the logic of music. I am not saying that these endeavours are always successful; the logic of much of the popular music of our time is sometimes 'unified' solely by retaining the same instrumentation between two otherwise diverse segments. But in more successful transitions (and here we must think not only of transitions in tonality but in rhythm, melody and any other aspect of a particular sound segment) the logic will be strong enough to ensure that while a change is felt, it is not so great as to be incomprehensible. The listener, that is, must feel a real change is occurring and not simply the abrupt commencement of a new and different passage.

The second means by which ambiguity may arise, as noted, is when the logic becomes so intricate that what is heard is not fully apprehended. A composer's demands are sometimes great; thoroughly to understand a work one must sometimes relate subtle details, derive present sound segments from previous and less noticeable ones, be conscious of several coexisting axioms or derivations, as well as being familiar with various general axioms. It is when a great quantity of relations (vertical or horizon-

tal) between axioms and derivations occurs that the logic of a work becomes complex, and it is by questioning just how all these sounds and sound segments relate and are connected that the feeling of ambiguity arises. Pablo Casals once said that each morning upon playing the same Bach Prelude he inevitably heard something new. This statement might be extreme, but it expresses the complexity a work may possess. Surely in some sense Casals heard and was aware of the notes he was playing just from the fact he was playing them. But the newness to which he referred was the recognition of the detailed and subtle relations between sounds. Before these relations are understood, however, their function is held in abeyance; a belief in the logic of the work conflicts with doubt as to what exactly this logic is, forcing the listener to feel unsure of the meaning of what is heard.

The resolution of ambiguity due to a series of complex relations may occur, as with Casals, from repeated hearings; it will most often take place, however, after the listener becomes more acquainted with the particular axioms and derivations as the work progresses. The reason here is both simple and important: meaning in music comes about not only from what one is able to predict and expect in a sequence of sounds but from what and how much one is able at each moment to derive from what has been heard. The past in any work is as important as the future, for meaning depends on each.[13]

It is a serious error of Meyer's to disregard the meaning a phrase or passage may have by virtue of its similarity and derivability (for those who perceive it) from previous sounds (i.e. axioms). It is this neglect which causes him to conclude that uniformity and weakening of shape will initiate ambiguity. 'A series is ambiguous because the listener is unable to envisage with any reliable or decisive degree of probability what the future terms will be.'[14] Thus the listener cannot predict the 'final goal'. As an example, a descending harmonic and rhythmic sequential pattern is cited. Owing to its repetitious character one begins to doubt, says Meyer, where the passage is leading. But there is normally far less ambiguity in such instances than he supposes, for it is because of the similarity within the sequence (or development, imitation, repetition, etc.) which these strong derivations provide that the listener finds security and familiarity. And with the meaning clear any ambiguity which otherwise might have occurred is unrealized. If anything, a truly uniform sequence will produce boredom before it creates anxiety. Perhaps the most notorious example of this can be found in the *Eighteen Twelve* Overture, in which the transition leading to the re-entry of the opening theme is nothing but a continuation of a single four-note motif from

which forty-one derivations of this axiom are heard. Now there may be some amusement here and towards the end some doubt whether the sequence will *ever* conclude; but this record-sticking technique makes it so clear where you are by relating material from where you have come that ambiguity, if there is any at all, is minimal.

Ambiguity is not simply a doubt as to the direction a passage is taking, nor is it a simple delay in resolution (in which case tension and suspense may result). Ambiguity in its true meaning is the understanding of a single passage or sound segment in two or more diverse ways as, for example, in the case where the logic of two or more vertically related axioms or derivations is not understood or, as in the case of deviations, when a passage seemingly does and does not have meaning. But in both instances there must prevail an underlying logic; at times perhaps weak, realized by only a continuity, say, of instrumentation, harmony and tempo, but nevertheless strong enough to force the listener to *question* the significance and meaning of what is heard. In order to hear the tonality modulate or the recapitulation begin or the rhythm fluctuate one must relate what has occurred to what is occurring. Derivations enable the listener better to relate one sound segment to another and hence to determine the function and meaning of each.

Moreover it is essential when ambiguity occurs for derivations by our second rule of inference (similarity) to be used. Remembering that our hypothetical construction contained a limited number of derivations by similarity, it was suggested that such a work could still be learned through conditioning and repeated hearings. But we saw that understanding such a sequence of sounds would involve little more than learning by rote. Since expectation would always immediately be resolved, therefore, the possibility of deviation would be excluded and ambiguity resulting from deviation would, of course, also not occur. Deviation implies a partial change, not a complete change, and this in turn implies a retention within the ambiguous passage of some aspects of sound. It is not enough for the music simply to deviate, in which case what is heard is illogical and not questioned; it must retain a unity the strength of which is proportionate to the degree of deviation.[15] Likewise ambiguity arising from a complex logic would not be heard for, as we have seen, resolution in these cases comes about through a familiarity and sorting out of what once seemed confusing or disconnected. And this is not a resolution of expectaion but of similarity.[16] Derivations by similarity are essential as they provide for the logical and comprehensible relations which ambiguous segments must retain. We must thus conclude that not only consistency but ambiguity demands derivations by similarity and that because these derivations

are obviously not something learned, understanding music is always something more than acquiring the right habits or being appropriately conditioned.

We have seen, now, that within a musical passage, movement or complete work the logic of music involves two rules of inference and two classes of axioms, only one of which is learned. Meyer's position as to how much of music appreciation and understanding is a matter of learning is not entirely clear. He says at one point that we must admit some universal characteristics such as are found in the music of all cultures and styles; for example intervals of a fourth, fifth and octave are mentioned. More importantly, he writes of 'the limitations imposed upon the combining of sounds (as a) common characteristic of musical language'.[17] I take this to mean something like our restriction on inconsistency. However, there are far more quotations of the following nature:

> . . . the studies of comparative musicologists . . . have made us increasingly aware that the particular organization developed in Western music is not universal, natural, or God-given.[18]
>
> In general it seems wise and prudent to treat all aspects of a style system as learned and culturally determined.[19]
>
> Understanding music is . . . a matter of habits correctly acquired in one's self and properly presumed in the particular work.[20]

To some extent I have already attempted to show that there do exist certain necessary relations in music, namely derivation by similarity, and furthermore (which is more, I believe, than Meyer is willing to concede) that these relations are important as they are essential for understanding and comprehension. We have agreed that to some degree musical understanding is a matter of habits and a conditioned response; but an examination of the logic of music shows, I think, that we must conclude that there do exist aspects of style and organization upon which understanding and meaning depend which are independent of any era, culture or period. I should like to support this position by the consideration of the following points.

We have agreed that inconsistency in music results from an insufficient similarity between sounds. It is quite possible, however, that even though a work is consistent, the logic is comparatively weak owing to an overabundant use of axioms. In the case of vertical relations too many simultaneously occurring axioms cannot be properly related and balanced. Bach's counterpoint was often scored for four voices, but one rarely discovers more than two or three of these played or sung at one time. The music of Richard Strauss affords various examples of works using

a great number of axioms. The number of themes in *Ein Heldenleben*, for instance, provides enough material for four or five works. And, of course, this is exactly the source of these themes. If one is acquainted with these works, that is if one is able to derive themes in *Ein Heldenleben* from other sources, then one may find meaning here; but within itself the use of so many unrelated segments causes passages in this work to be not fully comprehensible. In reference to visual art Arnheim speaks of the 'law of parsimony' and goes on to say that 'when a work of art is praised for "having simplicity", it is understood to organize a wealth of meaning and form in an over-all structure that clearly defines the place and function of every detail in the whole'.[21] In music composition a 'wealth of meaning' results from similarity and not expectation. And a limited number of axioms provides for just this—a greater unity and a finer logical network of sounds.

Secondly, though the axioms in a work may be limited, they may also be so blasé and uninteresting as to create little expectation and to provide a limited potential for similarity. What differentiates the 'musical' works of children or early students of composition from the norm is often not an unpleasantness of sound but a lack of organization and of sufficiently strong logic. Insignificantly one set of sounds drifts into another, lacking substance and any clear demarcation between sound segments. Here again we see that when a work's logic is weak the meaning of its sound segments is likewise weak, and what are needed are stronger derivations by similarity.

Lastly, let us consider the possibility of understanding and appreciating a work on the initial hearing. Let us in fact go to extremes and consider if it would be possible for a hypothetical listener who had never previously been exposed to any work nor had formed conditioned responses to musical stimuli to understand his first musical experience. Like Hume's ideal critic, let us implant in him those qualities which free him from subjectivity. He will then possess a 'delicacy in imagination' and a sufficient intellect and good sense while lacking those prejudices which may pervert his 'natural sentiments'.[22] Is it likely or even possible that such a listener find value and meaning in what he hears? Meyer's answer shall be no; such a creature could not enjoy and comprehend any work until he had acquired those habits suitable for listening. But we must conclude differently. Certainly without the knowledge of general axioms derivations from expectations could not immediately be formed; and there would probably be some derivations (e.g. formal ones) never made. However, derivations by similarity would surely be made and with a limit on the number of axioms the work would be organized and gain meaning.

Derivations in rhythm, harmony, melody and instrumentation could all be formed, establishing the significance of particular axioms. Through such derivations our listener would come to understand the work's particular axioms as any listener does, that is by perceiving the multitude of relations the axiom's content has in a variety of contexts. Moreover it seems likely that expectations would eventually arise. Continuity in metre and rhythm as well as instrumentation would soon be anticipated over unified passages. Tonal centres would similarly be established; harmonic progressions (i.e. general axioms), being repeated, would also arouse expectations; and conceptualization of frequently heard vertical and horizontal harmonies would provide potential for deviation and resolution. And ambiguity resulting from a complex logic, being independent of any learned expectation, could still be appreciated. In short our listener would grasp most of the meaning of any work by his ability to form derivations independent of conditioning and by abstracting general axioms from particular ones. And as we have seen, because such derivations and a limited use of axioms are necessary properties of musical composition, we must infer that our inexperienced and unconditioned listener will understand the 'wealth of meaning' in any work.

In consideration of what has been said I should like to conclude with a word on the relativist theory of value. The thrust of the relativist argument seems to be founded on the fact that what one feels ought to be appreciated by others simply not always is. This point, for example, is crucial to the positivist's contention that aesthetic judgements, like ethical judgements, are merely expressions of an individual's feelings.[23] But this sort of analysis suggests that to speak of a work as 'beautiful' or 'hideous' is on a par with statements verifying simple empirical facts. Aesthetic statements, of course, require perception, but the process by which one concludes that a work of art is beautiful is far more complex and involved than, for example, one in which the colour or shape of a particular object is determined.

Our analysis, I believe, has shown to the contrary that the appreciation of any musical work presupposes an 'acceptance' of its axioms and an understanding of its logic. This is to say that because value and meaning in music are not universal does not imply that they are not universalizable. Each culture, each period, and to some extent the works of each composer represent a style of music which because of its uniqueness can only potentially be understood and appreciated by all. What is culturally determined and learned is not the logic of music *but only its axioms.* More exactly, one's understanding of a set of general axioms cannot conflict with a particular work's axioms if enjoyment and aesthetic appreciation are one's

goal. If a listener feels that a I–IV–VII harmonic progression must resolve to a III chord, he will have a difficult time valuing a Bach Prelude. (In this regard, our inexperienced listener has an advantage; forming no initial expectations, he could hardly have found derivations by expectation inconsistent.) Since derivations by similarity are innately perceived, one need not learn anything in this respect. However, if the quality of a particular axiom is for some reason disliked or connotes some unpleasant extra-musical meaning, it will be difficult for one to enjoy a work constructed around such an axiom. Western listeners, for instance, are often uncomfortable with the bending of tones used in Eastern music and jazz. A second example is afforded by what seems, sadly enough, to be a fairly common technique in teaching recognition of Schubert's *Unfinished* Symphony. It just so happens that the number of syllables in the sentence 'This is the symphony which Schubert did not finish' corresponds exactly to the number of pitches in the second (violin) theme of the first movement. Indeed these 'lyrics' will come to mind when the theme is heard; but this is also enough to make even the least sensitive of listeners find little worth in this work.

What do we say, then, to critic X if he does not appreciate, say, Bach's B Minor Mass? Are not his feelings and reactions valid? To be sure a person can never truly be certain that the aesthetic value in this work is great until he has experienced it; but from the testimony of others he should strongly question if not renounce his judgement. Does he understand the general axioms and apply the correct rules of inference as Bach used them? Is there something about the particular axioms—the themes, the voices, the language, the instrumentation—which X does not enjoy? Is it a matter of the musical logic being too complex? Are X's ear and intellect adequate for deriving segments and sounds by similarity? Or is it a matter of recognition of such derivations which a score or teacher may enhance? All these questions X must ask himself, for each may be sufficient to cause him to misconstrue or not value any part of what is heard.

To sum up: our analysis has shown that the sounds and relations between sounds in any musical work can be expressed in terms of musical logic, that the notions of derivation and axiom may legitimately be used in analysis, and that it is by expressing music theory through these terms that what is necessary and can be meaningfully examined and criticized is made more apparent. We have seen that meaning in music (i.e. meaning which we believe others ought to perceive) results not only from the resolution of one's expectations but from the similarity one passage or group of sounds may have with another. Moreover derivations by simi-

larity were found to be an essential part of musical composition. Lastly, it has been argued that the understanding and aesthetic appreciation of a work is far from a relative thing and that the differentiation between the logic of music and its axioms and rules of inference clearly shows this.

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[1] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757). Ed. J. T. Boulton (1958), pp. 11, 12.

[2] Leonard Meyer, *Emotion and Meaning in Music* (1956).

[3] Arnold Schönberg, *Style and Idea* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), p. 143.

[4] Meyer, p. 51.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

[6] A clearer analogy may be made if we think of the rule of substitution in many systems of formal logic. Here the logician is able freely to derive new formulas from old, depending upon what he chooses to substitute.

[7] In Wittgenstein's words: 'In logic there are no surprises.'

[8] Derivations from particular axioms are not always made by similarity of sound, for just the initial hearing of this type of axiom will very likely cause the listener to *expect* a near repetition upon a re-entrance.

[9] Helmut Hungerland, 'Consistency as Criterion in Art Criticism', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 7, No. 2 (1948), p. 103.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[11] I restrict our discussion of ambiguity to its usage by Meyer, that is to relations between sounds or sound segments. One of course often speaks of the interpretation of a passage or work as ambiguous as well.

[12] The VI chord is unexpected, of course, only on the assumption that the harmonic sequence must immediately resolve with a different sound (probably a I chord). This is not always the case. Wagner's repeated use of the deceptive cadence in for example *Tristan*, while at first surprising, eventually is heard as meaningful and pleasing. This sort of change in the applied rules of inference may actually be due to a change in the general axiom resulting from a change in the sounds, such as different instrumentation, or a change in the relations of sounds. New expectations may also arise if the general axiom is derived, by similarity, from previous sound segments or sounds. This last means indicates that a change in meaning may take place as a result of derivations by similarity (see below). In either case, a change in the axiom or rule of inference results from a change in the logic.

[13] One may infer from this that I restrict the meaning of music to these syntactical relations, which I do not. As alluded to in the above, meaning in music also arises from what a group of sounds connotes; i.e. the extra-musical meaning which one feels or imagines as a result of the individual interpretation placed on a work's axioms. We can say then that the complete meaning any work possesses will entail what the axioms express for the listener in conjunction with what can be derived from these axioms.

[14] Meyer, p. 172.

[15] One exception should be noted. Meyer speaks of 'class concepts' or 'ideal types' which are abstractions of 'a host of works in such forms', such as sonata

form or theme and variation, and he implies that a deviation may arise in one's concept of a particular form. For example, the last movement of the *Eroica* clearly deviates from the routine theme and variation form. It is questionable, however, that in such instances there is much ambiguity, simply because expectation in form, almost never being the same from work to work, is not great. Certainly to some extent one is surprised when Beethoven begins a development section rather than a fourth variation in this movement, and it is difficult to see how this section, taken as a whole, is similar to a previous variation or theme. But one's class concept is only one aspect of music, and we see that within this section unity and necessary formal relations are heard through similarity. What would really be surprising would be a development structured around a theme in, say, his first symphony or perhaps one from a *Brandenburg Concerto*. Ambiguity, however, would no longer be felt. One may feel a *new* work was beginning, but the feeling of 'unity' could arise only on the acceptance of inconsistency.

[16] We have assumed here that ambiguity will not occur when resolution does not follow. It, of course, certainly is possible for such ambiguity to never even potentially be resolved, but in practice this seems very unlikely as it would then be, as Meyer has said, 'aesthetically valueless'.

[17] Meyer also discusses 'the *law* of good continuation' (my emphasis) which clearly indicates he recognizes some of the necessary relations in music to which I have referred. I can only reiterate that he does not stress the importance of these relations as they affect the meaning and understanding of music. It is, of course, this importance which this article will hopefully explain.

[18] Meyer, p. 6.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 63.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[21] Rudolph Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception* (1956), p. 45.

[22] David Hume, 'On the Standard of Taste' in *Essays Moral, Political and Literary* (1741–42).

[23] E.g. A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic* (1952), pp. 102–14.

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ART AND CRAFT: THE DISTINCTION

T. R. Martland

AN INTERESTING and I hope fruitful way to begin to understand the distinction between objects or activities which we usually label art and those which we usually label craft, is to suggest that it is very much like the difference between Oskar's visit to Schmuh's Onion Cellar, which Gunter Grass discusses in *The Tin Drum*, and Faust's visit to Auerbach's cellar in Leipzig, as Goethe presents it in Part I of *Faust*. This is to say Oskar's visit is to art as Faust's visit is to craft.

I

In order to explicate this suggested parallel all that we need to know about Oskar's visit is Grass's one-paragraph description of the situation. In it he tells us that

> The host handed them a little chopping board—a pig or a fish—a paring knife for eighty pfennings, and for twelve marks an ordinary field-garden-, and kitchen variety onion, and induced them to cut their onions smaller and smaller until the juice—what did the onion juice do? It did what the world and the sorrows of the world could not do; it brought forth a round, human tear. It made them cry. At last they were able to cry again. To cry properly, without restraint, to cry like mad. The tears flowed and washed everything away. The rain came. The dew. Oskar has a vision of flood-gates opening. Of dams bursting in the spring floods.[1]

But we cannot so easily garner the suitably commensurate knowledge about Faust's visit. Although the scene 'Auerbach's Cellar in Leipzig' does contain Mephistopheles's promise to Faust that

> A revelation shall you see
> Of Charming bestiality,

a more complete understanding of the motivation behind the visit begins to be clear when we recall that the terms of the contract previously agreed upon in Faust's study between Mephistopheles and Faust were such that to any experience in Faust's fleeting hours he never can say: 'Remain,

so fair thou art, remain!' That is to say: under penalty of losing his soul Faust can never want to remain with a specific joy for ever. Thus the scene in Auerbach's cellar is one of Mephistopheles's attempts to seduce Faust into wanting just this which he cannot have: it is Mephistopheles's attempt to make Faust want to rest content with a beauty or a joy which he already is experiencing. Whereas earlier in the play Mephistopheles spurs Faust by suggesting that,

> . . . we. . . .
> Must take our joys before they fade,

he now whisks him away so that he may take in the specific joy of witnessing to a 'charming bestiality', hoping of course that Faust will want to say to it: 'Remain, so fair thou art, remain!'

Now let us think back for a moment about that which we know of those occurrences in Schmuh's cellar. What Oskar is experiencing there is the very thing which Mephistopheles does not want Faust to experience for fear he will never gain Faust's soul. Notice that when Oskar visited Schmuh's cellar he wasn't looking for any one particular thing. Therefore he was receptive to all things, at least for these moments, and incapable of saying: 'Remain, so fair thou art, remain!' He even was open to receiving that which could destroy his understanding of previous things. Grass tells us this is what happened in fact. Oskar's final revelation or vision was of flood-gates *opening*, of yesterday's dams *bursting* under the pressure of today's floods. In contrast, when Faust visited Auerbach's cellar in Leipzig he was looking for something, a 'charming bestiality'. Therefore he could only find that something for which he was looking—or nothing. Of course, this something was a bestiality which Faust already knew, if only in anticipation. Otherwise how would he know it when he found it? Thus whereas Schmuh's cellar offered the possibility of visions of things Oscar had not yet seen, Auerbach's cellar offered only the possibility of service to motivating intentions or visions Faust already had experienced.

We will carry this difference between the experiences in the two cellars one step further. Notice that it is only by and through those tears which he shed in Schmuh's cellar that Oskar could come into that vision of things which he had not yet seen. Grass tells us: 'The tears flowed and washed everything away.' As J. L. Austin might put it, the tears themselves did something. Like his example of the 'I do' as uttered in the course of the marriage ceremony, or the 'I name this ship the Queen Elizabeth' as uttered when smashing the bottle against the bow, or the 'I give and

bequeath my watch to my brother' as occurring in a will, Oskar's tears do not refer to what he already has done but they 'indulge' in what he now is doing. Austin would say that in their 'appropriate circumstance' they 'perform'. We might say they intervene. The tears which Oskar shed in Schmuh's cellar themselves intervened or participated in making a difference in Oskar's world.

It is important not to let the full significance of this point dissipate by assuming that it is the nature of the activity itself which brings about this intervention, that tears, no matter whose, by their nature must make a difference in the world. It is not so. Austin is quite correct to emphasize the need for the 'appropriate circumstance'. If Oskar's tears were Faust's, and if they were shed in Auerbach's cellar, they never would make a difference in the world. There would be no intervention, no indulgence, no participation in essence, no performative. Faust's tears for ever would be like those Solon shed upon the death of his son. When he was asked why he was weeping thus 'if weeping avails nothing', Solon answered: 'Precisely for that reason—because it does not avail.' There is a depletion here, a breakdown between the tears themselves and what tears can accomplish. Just as we must think of Faust plus a 'charming bestiality' which Faust wishes to experience, so Solon and his questioner thought in terms of tears plus a something which they expect them to achieve, a something which exists and has a life apart from the tears. But these are not the tears about which Grass speaks or which Malinowski observed in mourning rites, or which we might observe in the *miserere* sung in communion. In these cases, in their appropriate circumstances, there is only the tears and that which flows from them, that which they do.

II

We now must go beyond these observations and attempt to relate them to the activities of art and craft. Our suggestion is that it is only to the 'appropriate circumstance' of an experience akin to Schmuh's cellar that men can go if it is artists they want to be, that it is only to the 'appropriate circumstance' of an experience akin to Auerbach's cellar that they can go if it is craftsmen they want to be. Art, too, but not craft, bursts yesterday's dams with the pressures of today's experiences. Art, too, but not craft, avails that which its activities themselves lay bare, never something which men grasp and predict beforehand. If an activity, like the one Faust pursued in his visit to Auerbach's cellar, has no room, either in practice or in principle, for new relationships or for new understandings, it cannot but be a craft, never art. It is a service to categories which men already

have completed, like the one which exists between a craftsman and his blueprint.

It is interesting to notice that patent law distinguishes a discovery from an invention on similar grounds. Discovery is that which makes an addition to men's knowledge of nature whereas invention is that which establishes a new operational principle which serves some previously acknowledged objective. Thus we could say discovery, along with art, points out or creates what men have not seen yet and invention, along with craft, ingeniously turns known facts to an unexpected advantage. For support consider Robert Browning's poem *Andrea del Sarto*. In it he criticizes Andrea because unlike the discoverer he does not create what men have not seen yet. Accordingly Andrea fails as an artist. He is intent upon showing off his already known talent, his superiority of craftsmanship, rather than being intent upon gaining new insight. His affinity is with those artificers who are intent upon evoking memories of sense experiences which are gone, to do what 'fits in', to reaffirm, but never to discover.

This is also Fry's explicit criticism of Brueghel, or for that matter the basis of a great deal of the criticism of say Cranach or Manet's *Olympia*. Fry calls Brueghel 'essentially an illustrator rather than an artist' because: 'He does not speak to the mind directly through visible harmonies but by the associations which his images called up, by their references to actual life.'[2] The criticism is simply that Brueghel's pictures derive their meaning and appeal from releasing what men already have experienced rather than by adding to an understanding. His skill is not in providing an experience but in providing an occasion for re-living an experience. If Fry is correct in his evaluation of Brueghel, his works provide a reminder to us of what we all have seen and done but they add no new factor to our experience. As such they are means to an end, not unlike Mephistopheles's attempt to get Faust to visit Auerbach's cellar or, better, like Faust's own reasons for the visit, a means to experience 'charming bestiality'. Their production becomes a skill, and Brueghel, Mephistopheles and Faust rank as craftsmen. In harmony with Aquinas's definition of a craftsman Brueghel 'is moved to action by the end, which is the thing wrought, for instance a chest or a bed.'[3] Before he began his 'action' he knew the end for which he worked and he had no need or room for the contribution of 'the thing wrought' other than bringing it into being.[4]

III

Thus our distinction comes down to this: In so far as certain activities serve the past, in so far as they draw men's attention, even their authors'

own attention, to preconceived plans or ends, they are crafts. They are prejudged. They themselves crystallize prejudices into stereotypes. In effect they transform the empirical to the *a priori*. Canned reaction replaces open response. The resultant object is directed *ad hominem*, an arrangement to suit the man, a recognition, something subordinated to his emotions or memories, but never in Dewey's use of the word, a perception. This is to say, if it pleases, it pleases not *qua* object but *qua* that which is helps us to recognize, i.e. the quality of the scene, memory or incident it illustrates. It appeals, as Whistler once put it, to a people who

> have acquired the habit of looking, as who should say, not at a picture, but through it, at some human fact, that shall, or shall not, from a social point of view, better their mental or moral state. So we have come to hear of the painting that elevates, and of the duty of the painter of the picture that is full of thought, and of the panel that merely decorates.[5]

For these people, certainly practical Sancho Panza's by preference, the inn would be preferable to the road. Whereas the artist would look at the inn with a detached eye or a disinterested vision so that on the morrow he could escape from its particular circumstances and comforts and take to the road again, hopefully to experience newer and pleasanter inns, these craftsmen only want to reproduce or reconfirm the particular circumstance and comfort of this inn which they already have experienced. They would want to reawaken its pleasures, certainly never to change them or to affect them. They would want to find a means to point, to serve as surrogate, to stand as proxy, but certainly not to take to the road and move beyond them.

In this their kinship is with those dissections done with the intention not to do research but to teach and illustrate the truths that were in Galen, with those Christian stories about Jesus written and told not to recount the facts but to awaken a belief in him as the Messiah, with those illustrations which men paint in order to sell a can of beer, with those Dutch still lifes which we appreciate because their depicted objects excite the appetite, with those crusaders who murdered the Turks in the Promised Land in order to earn a place in Heaven, with that Marxist literature which cultivates in the Soviet and Chinese people a richness and versatility of Socialist reality which helps 'the masses to propel history forward' and which exposes all that hinders the progress of their society, and finally with those political and ecclesiastical authorities who gathered in 787 at Nicea and declared: 'The composition of religious imagery is not left to the initiative of artists, but is formed upon principles laid down by the Catholic Church and by religious tradition. . . . The execution

alone belongs to the painter, the selection and arrangement of subject belong to the Fathers.'

They are craftsmen all, Gepettos or Kings of Cyprus, who by their actions intend to bring to life their own favourite Pinocchio or their own favourite Pygmalion. Along with Faust in Auerbach's cellar they all intend to evoke old experiences rather than to move on to new experiences. They all want the security of repossessing the past, to release or defend again what they already experience. This means none of them have room in their work for what the work itself might add. None of them want the obligation to relate to the open future. None of them have the intention to save themselves for what Delacroix calls 'a certain abandon later on, for discoveries made as the work advances'.

In contrast there are those who would prefer to be Don Quixotes, who would prefer the road to the inn. Archibald MacLeish gives us an even better analogy. What he writes on behalf of the poet in his *Invocation to the Social Muse* is in truth written about all artists.

> We are
> Whores, Fraulein; poets, Fraulein, are persons of
> Known vocation following troops: they must sleep with
> Stragglers from either prince and of both views.
> The rules permit them to further the business of neither.
> It is also strictly forbidden to mix in manoeuvers.
> Those that infringe are inflated with praise on the plazas—
> Their bones are resultantly afterwards found under newspapers.

Artists are whores, every one. They have time for all but they further the business of none. Though they begin with what they have gained from their particular hour and from their particular place, they quickly move on to bring into focus, to manifest, a new understanding, a new relationship. And observe, as it was Oskar's tears which performed, so it is only by whoring that whores escape from afterwards being found under yesterday's newspaper. It is the same with art. As Oskar and the whore perform and never rest content with what they already have, so the artist never can rest content and call out: 'Remain, so fair thou art, remain!' Only by doing what they must do new understandings become manifest. Just as there should not have been a Faust plus a 'charming bestiality' which he knew and wanted to experience, if it was his soul he wanted to save, nor tears plus a something Solon hoped to achieve, so there is not art plus an understanding with which it must remain. There is only the activity being performed or the object itself which carries meaning within itself.

Jacob Epstein asserts as much when he forcefully insists: 'I certainly will not explain my work. *The explanation lies in the work itself.* It is my last word.'[6] He is telling us that men must pay attention to the sculptured piece, not to that which may be written below. There are simply no words to which it fits. They would be akin to the force of yesterday's newspapers. There is the work which is meaningful, and that is all. Klee is so sensitive to this burden of the work itself that he gives his pictures titles that instead of providing an expected explanation of the objects on the canvas by indicating some common and already experienced frame of reference, simply repeat the picture's parts. That is to say he re-enumerates in print what he already has set down in drawing. This of course frees him from trying to explain his work by relating it to experiences outside of the work itself. It also compels us, the observers, to find that meaning by going back to the picture itself.

IV

Perhaps an analogy Robert Frost once used best puts everything together. The artist is like the fellow who goes into the field to pull carrots but refuses to leave the carrots just as they are. What he does is to keep on

> pulling them patiently enough until he finds a carrot that suggests something else to him. It is not shaped like other carrots. He takes out his knife and notches it here and there, until the pronged roots become legs and the carrot takes on something of the semblance of a man.[7]

In this he is not like a craftsman or the Faust whom Mephistopheles hopes is being seduced into wanting to leave the carrots just as they are, but rather like the Oskar in Schmuh's cellar who by learning to cry in the 'appropriate circumstance' has these old visions washed away. What the puller of carrots does is take hold of that bit of life which he finds, notch it here and there, and lo and behold, it becomes something new.

If there were a history of such a breed of carrot pullers, I suspect we would notice a kind of evolution taking place, not so much a succession of steps towards an understanding as a succession of steps away from previously established understandings.

REFERENCES

[1] Gunter Grass, *The Tin Drum*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Penguin Books, 1965), p. 517.

[2] Roger Fry, *French, Flemish and British Art* (1951), p. 121.

[3] *Summa Theologica* I, 105, 5.

[4] Brueghel provides us with an excellent opportunity to apply the distinctions presented in this article. It is difficult to accept the negative evaluation of Brueghel as 'essentially an illustrator,' especially in an age which so readily tries to accept as artists the confessed illustrators Aubrey Beardsley of the *Yellow Book* and Gustav Doré, who illustrated the prison yard for Herrold's *London*. For example, Stephen Pepper is so sure that Brueghel is a great artist that he develops a whole discussion on 'what is a work of art' around Brueghel's winter scene *Hunters in the Snow*. He declares it is a picture of 'unquestioned aesthetic worth'. *The Work of Art* (1955), p. 14. But there is merit in what Fry says regarding Brueghel's *genre* paintings of peasant scenes. Although it might not be quite fair to imply along with Fry that if an observer has to follow the subject matter in order to understand a picture, then the picture must be bad, it is fair to ask in such paintings as *Children's Games* and *The Netherlandish Proverbs* if the observer's understanding, which Brueghel does enlarge, is merely an enlargement of the subject matter of Brueghel's own time. If this is true, these pictures constitute an end, not a beginning. They are artifacts and not art. They herald no new style, no further insight. Their value is historical. They only speak of an age long ago, not to our age, this age, the one in which we now must live.

[5] James Abbott McNeill Whistler, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (1953), p. 137.

[6] Jacob Epstein to Arnold L. Haskell, *The Sculptor Speaks* (1932), p. 61.

[7] Marguerite Wilkinson, *The Way of the Makers* (1925), p. 207.

SOME ASPECTS OF YORUBA AESTHETICS[1]

Babatunde Lawal

AESTHETICS DEALS with the philosophy of the beautiful as well as with the standards of value in judging art and other aspects of human life and culture. Among the Yoruba of Western Nigeria the beautiful is that which possesses *ewà*. *Ewà* is the manifestation of the 'well-made' or the 'well-done'. Being pleasant to behold or experience it attracts (*fanimóra*), eliciting admiration, honour and respect (*iyi*).

To the Yoruba *ewà* has two realities, the outer (*ewà ode*)[2] and the inner (*ewà inú*).[3] *Ewà ode* has to do with the surface quality of things or outward appearance in general. *Ewà inú* on the other hand refers to the intrinsic worth of things. In man *ewà inú* is frequently implied in the word *iwà*, or character, while in objects it is implied in the word *wíwúlo*, or functional utility. Thus in Yoruba culture *ewà* is synonymous with 'good' or *dára*. What lacks *ewà* is simply bad, *burú*. The physically ugly female is *oburewà*, while her male counterpart is simply described as 'not good', *eni ti ko dára*. The badly made object is also 'not good', *ko dára* or *ko suwon*.

Although the ideal Yoruba man should be tall (*gun*), well built (*sing-bonlè*), good-looking and well-complexioned (light or dark), while the ideal female should have similar characteristics (except that hers should be feminine), beauty is also seen in the *mean* (*iwontúnwonsi*), i.e. average height, complexion and looks. In fact most Yoruba would prefer the *mean* because while the extremely ugly is often despised, the extremely beautiful is often held suspect. This can be inferred from the saying: '*Oyin dun ni, ki i s'ore inú*' (The honey is sweet, but it is unpleasant in the stomach).[4] For the Yoruba regard extremely sweet things as causing worms, and consequently stomach-ache.

Yoruba folk tales abound in instances of women who wished to marry the most handsome men; but to their disappointment and eventual ruin some of these men later turned out to be spirits in disguise.[5] Similarly

witches, spirits and certain animals are believed to have the power to transform themselves into extremely beautiful women.

The fear of the supernatural aside, the competition for the most beautiful woman is so keen that she can hardly settle with any one man. A modern Yoruba song by the late Ayinde Bakare aptly sums up the situation:

B'óbinrin dára jù
Agbèrè á fo l'órí.
Iwà àibikítà
At'ojú ò gbé'bikan o . . .
Wàhálà ni pe k'obinrín dára jù
Aisinmi l'ó nfà wá f'óko o

If a woman is too beautiful
She'll practise prostitution
Will be arrogant
And unsettled . . .
It is a problem if one's wife is too beautiful
It brings unrest to the husband.

The reason for the frequent avoidance of the extremely beautiful can partly be sought in 'intrinsic worth'. Thus in the saying *'èsúrú se àseju, o té l'ówó oníyán* (the pounded-yam seller is not impressed by the attractive colour of the *èsúrú* yam), the *esuru* is ignored by the pounded-yam seller because, when pounded, it is not as pasty as the ordinary pounded yam. Therefore the most important element in the Yoruba conception of human beauty is *ewà inú*, or character (*iwà*). According to the Yoruba *iwà* is the very stuff which makes life a joy because not only does it please *Olorun* (the High-God), it also endears one to the hearts of all men.[6] While the appreciation of *ewà ode* is relative and varies from person to person, the possession of *iwà* is universally accepted as the *sine qua non* of beauty. Hence the saying: *'iwà l'ewà'* (character is beauty).

A man's character is either good or bad. If it is good, he is called *omoláwàbí* (the well-born); and if bad, *ènià l'ásán* (a useless person) or even *eranko* (an animal). The pre-eminence of good character (*iwà rere* or *iwà pele*) is summed up in the following poem:

Omo t'ó dára tíkò n'íwà
Omo-langidi ni í
Iwà rere l'èsó ènià
B'óbirin dára bí Egbárá
Bi kò n'íwà

Omo-langidi ni í
B'ókùnrin sùwòn, sùwòn
Bí eja inú omi
Bi kò n'iwà rere
Omo-langidi ni í

If a child is beautiful but has no character
He is no more than a wooden doll.
Good character is the beauty of a person.
A woman can be as beautiful as the *Egbara*[8]
If she has no character
She is no more than a wooden doll.
A man may be very very handsome
Like a fish in the water
If he has no character
He is no more than a wooden doll.[9]

The person who is outwardly beautiful but inwardly ugly or lacks character is called *awobowà* (*lit.* skin covers character) or *ojú l'arí, osó o dé'nú* (superficial beauty). The physical beauty of such a person may at first be admired, but as soon as his inner ugliness surfaces he becomes repulsive. His beauty is immediately beclouded by the flames of his character: for the Yoruba see character as manifesting itself like a flame—*'èéfín n'iwà'*. An *awobowà* may be the best dancer, singer, drummer or carver in town; his inner ugliness, however, prevents people from appreciating the quality of anything he does: *'Eni l'orí rere tí ko n'iwà, iwà l'ó ma ba ori rè jé'*.[10] The *Omolúwàbí*, on the other hand, is a beloved person. Even if he is ugly, his character is so pleasing that people are usually blind to his ugliness. Hence the saying: *'Eni aiye nfé ko nl'ábuku l'ára'* (The favourite of the world is usually seen as faultless).

Apart from *iwà*, strength (*agbára*), wisdom (*ogbón*), sanity and good health (*ilera*) enhance *ewà*. Conversely the weak or the lazy (*ole*), the daft person (*omugo*) and the sickly (*aláilera*) are usually not admired even when they are handsome or well behaved. Thus *ewà* also refers to a sound mind. The sound mind glows with happiness or joy (*idunnú*). The mere possession of *ewà* and *iwà*, however, cannot guarantee happiness, which is the ultimate of not only the beautiful but of human life as well.

Being a blessing, *ewà* is no doubt a source of happiness. But the Yoruba do not deliberately ask for it in their prayers,[11] partly because 'we are already what we are', and partly because *ewà* is not only relative but can also be got from the other comparatively more important blessings of life. Wealth (*owó*), children (*omo*) and good health (*àláfià ati emí gígun*) are considered by the Yoruba as the three cardinal blessings[12] the possession

of which will to all intents and purposes generate happiness. Good character can be cultivated by the individual; hence the saying: '*owó are eni l'áfí ntún iwà ara eni se*' (a man can improve his character by himself); but the three cardinal blessings are usually 'given'. Hence the saying: '*kitàkità o mólà, k'a sisé bi erú ko da'nkan*' (wealth is a blessing, it is not necessarily procured by dint of hard work).

At the religious level the High-God, *Olórun*, is Beauty *par excellence*, because as the Creator (*Eleda*) He is the source of all that is beautiful. He is the Lord of character, *Olú Iwà*.[13] He is *Ogá Ogo*, 'The Master in Resplendence' and *Oyigiyigi*, 'The Mighty'.[14] However, since His Beauty is 'such-less' and He is also omnipresent, *Olórun* is not represented or symbolized in sculpture. He is never worshipped directly but through a host of lesser gods known as the *orisa*. It is to the latter that *Olórun* has delegated the responsibility of looking after the welfare of man.

The *orisa* can be divided into three main groups. The first are the primordial beings (i.e. they existed before the creation of man), such as *Orisánlá* (the *orisa* of creation), *Orunmilà* (the *orisa* of wisdom and divination), *Esu* (the messenger), among others. The second are deified ancestors who are collectively referred to as *okú orun* because they now dwell in the heavens.[15] To the Yoruba death is not total extinction but rather a passage from this world to another level of existence where the spirit of the deceased acquires more power. Thus almost every adult who dies is worshipped by his living descendants, who now see him as being in a position to intercede with the other *orisa* on their behalf. The third category of *orisa* consists of nature spirits, *imalè* or *ebora*. These are believed to dwell in trees, ponds, hills and other natural phenomena.

The very fact of their divinity invests the *orisa* with a kind of beauty which is reflected in the enthusiasm or fervour with which the devotee regards his *orisa*. But in the long run the beauty of an *orisa* in the mind of the devotee depends on the extent to which the *orisa* seems to have met his needs, that is his quest for happiness. If a devotee attributes his success in life to his *orisa*, he reciprocates not only with costly sacrifices but also by making its shrine as beautiful as possible. Festivals in honour of such *orisa* are usually very colourful. But those who feel neglected by their *orisa* in spite of their devotion often pay little or no attention to the beauty of the shrine. Eventually they may try their luck with another *orisa*.

Although good character is a pre-requisite for beauty in human life, this does not apply to the *orisa*. The very fact of their divinity places them above the concept of morality. They enjoy what might be called 'divine licence'; for 'moral' is, as it were, a transaction between men not between the *orisa* or between man and the *orisa*. The freakishness or the ambivalent

behaviour of the *orisa* is therefore accepted with what might be called a fatalistic resignation. Ironically, the ambivalence of the *orisa* is sometimes praised. For instance *Sango* (the *orisa* of thunder and lightning) is portrayed as a tyrant in one of his *oriki* (praise verses):

> If you do not share your maize gruel with him
> He will slip under your fingernail and take his share
> Sango takes by force![16]

Yet the same *Sango* is described affectionately as he who 'lends money and forgets to ask for its return'.[17]

Orisanla is believed to have fashioned man out of clay, after which *Olorun* breathed life into the image. But on one occasion *Orisanla* got drunk and consequently created cripples, hunchbacks and albinos. Yet *Olorun* breathed life into these images too. *Esu* is famous for his delight in mischief. None the less he is crucial to the stability of the cosmos as he is the messenger of the other *orisa*.

However, the *orisa* are believed to enforce good conduct in men and 'will protect only those who lead moral and just lives.'[18] The value of the *orisa*, therefore, can be seen in their ability to ensure order and happiness in the world. But order and happiness go hand in hand with their opposites. Hence the saying: '*Tibi, tire*' or '*Aigba're k'ámá gba'bi*' (Evil and Good go together).

While *Olorun* is never represented in person or even by symbols, some of the *orisa* are. *Esu*, for instance, is represented in sculpture as a short man wearing a pig-tail, although his shrine symbol is a piece of laterite stone. *Sango* is sometimes represented as a warrior on horseback, although his most important shrine symbol is the thunderbolt.

The fact that a good majority of these *orisa* are anthropomorphic partly explains the presence of human representations on their altars, even when none of these figures is identified as the portrait of the *orisa*. In the first instance these sculptures serve to enhance the visual quality of the altar, investing it with an affective or a numinous aspect. Secondly an anthropomorphic representation on the altar presents, so to speak, a human aspect, thereby facilitating a more intimate converse between the worshipper and the worshipped. In other words, the human figure enables the worshipper to speak to or deal with the *orisa* in human terms, even where the particular *orisa* may be no more than a natural phenomenon, like a hill.

It must be noted, however, that this is no 'idol-worship'. For even if prayers are addressed and libation is given to the image, the ultimate

'receiver' is the *orisa*. The sculpture to which it is literally given is no more than a vehicle, linking the visible world of the living with the invisible realm of the *orisa*. But by itself the sculpture has no life of its own. Indeed at a more secular level it is regarded as nothing but a piece of wood, which is easily discarded and replaced when destroyed by termites. At any rate in so far as it still functions on the altar religious sculpture is regarded as sacred, because, as a religious symbol, it 'participates in the power of the ultimate to which it points'.[19] Altar figures are not the 'messengers' of *Olorun*, as was once believed by the Christian missionaries. Neither are they the portraits of the *orisa*.

Since Yoruba anthropomorphic religious sculpture seems to hint at the humanity of the *orisa* rather than their physical reality, the sculpture need not be naturalistic. Conscious of the human and yet divine essence of the *orisa*, the carver only suggests humanity (*ènià*) in the sculpture. He proceeds by a method of 'selective realism', emphasizing only the most important parts of the human body. For instance the head (*orí*) is the biggest part of the sculpture because in real life it is the most vital part of the body. It contains the brain (*opolo*)—the seat of wisdom and reason; the eyes (*ojú*)—the lamps with which man wades through the dark jungle of life; the nose (*imú*)—with which he breathes and which is a source of ventilation for the soul (*emí*); the ears (*etí*)—with which he hears; and the mouth (*enu*)—with which he eats in order to keep body and soul together. To lose one's head is either to be insane or to be virtually dead. So important is the head in Yoruba culture that it has become the object of a cult, representing human destiny. A good *orí* ensures a happy and prosperous life, while a bad one condemns the individual to a life of failure.[20] Hence *orí* is actively worshipped. This focus on *orí* in real life is reflected in the sculpture. For it is on the head that the carver concentrates his skill and energy. The facial features, though stylized, are painstakingly delineated, while the rest of the body is merely abbreviated.

The naturalism of the Ife bronzes and terracottas must be cited here. The fact that some of them have been identified with past *Oni* (kings) of Ife shows that they are memorial portraiture rather than religious symbols. The 'selective realism' of the altar figure, on the other hand, alludes to a spiritual state. Thus the stylistic difference between the two sculptural modes seems to lie in a functional or contextual difference.

Artistic criticism is based on whether a piece of sculpture looks Yoruba, both facially and stylistically. Emphasis is on mere 'human resemblance' (*jíjo èniá*), rather than on photographic likeness.[21] Even the Ife bronze and terracotta portraits are idealized. Photographic likeness is avoided on the ground that it makes the model vulnerable to evil magic.

Other canons of artistic excellence include relative straightness (*gígún*), good composition and symmetry (*didógba*), clarity of mass (*ifarahon*), clarity of line (*fífín*) and relative luminosity and delicacy (*didon*).[22] A piece of sculpture that fails to meet these standards is rejected by the customer, and the carver would be obliged to improve upon it. Artistic criticism, however, ends in the workshop of the carver. Once consecrated and placed in the shrine the sculpture is no longer criticised. By and large sculpture is judged in terms of its visual appeal rather than character because, as one informant remarked, 'it can neither speak not act'. This again shows that a typical Yoruba sculpture cannot be labelled a 'fetish' or 'idol' which is believed to have magical power of its own.

As in human life and religious sculpture, beauty is also sought in dress, in utensils and in architecture.

Although the modern Yoruba frown on nudity, it is uncertain when the Yoruba started wearing clothes. It is possible, however, that they have been doing so for several centuries, as some of the Ife bronzes and terra-cottas (which are now believed to have been made in the early part of the Christian Era)[23] wear dresses, although these differ from the modern Yoruba dress.

Like many other cultural groups, the Yoruba see clothing as something which 'adds to a person' (*buyi kún*), apart from the fact that it protects the body from the weather. Appearance is an important element in Yoruba aesthetics: cleanliness is admired, while filthiness is detested. That which enhances personal appearance is *ohun èsó* (ornament). However, the same ornament can detract from one's appearance if it does not fit (*ye*). Hence the saying: '*Gèlè o dun bi ká mo ó wé, ka mo ó wé, ko dàbí kó ye ni*' (The headgear is good only when it fits). In other words the beauty of any personal adornment depends on whether it suits the wearer. A woman may wear the most expensive cloth, but if it does not suit her, she may be derided as *aró'gil'áso* (she wears cloth like wood). The well-dressed person is admired, while the under-dressed is ridiculed. This again underscores the principle of *iwontúnwonsi* (the mean) in Yoruba aesthetics.

Indigo blue appears to be the favourite colour of the Yoruba as it is the colour of the *àdiré*, the most popular of Yoruba fabrics. Since indigo blue is a cool colour, not too bright nor too dark, it can be correlated with the premium put by the Yoruba on cool character (*iwà tútu*)[26] and the principle of *iwontúnwonsi*. However, this preference for the cool colour does not necessarily imply that the Yoruba always react negatively to bright colours. For instance although red (*pupa*) portends danger and is the sacred colour of *Sango*, the *orisa* of thunder, not all shades of red carry

the same association. For both the palm oil (*epo pupa*) and cam-wood (*osun*) are reddish in colour, yet they are highly valued by the Yoruba.[27] However, the red of the palm oil and the cam-wood is not as harsh as that of *Sango*. White (*àlà*) symbolizes purity, implying the sacred. It is used mostly in rituals. Black (*dúdú*) on the other hand is regarded as portentous, as it suggests the evil that lurks in the dark. It is the sacred colour of *Esu*, who delights in mischief.[28] Nevertheless red, black and white, among other colours, can be appreciated on secular dress if they are well combined. But the person who wears an all-red or all-white garment is likely to be mistaken for a priest, while the person in an all-black dress is regarded either as a mourner or else somebody to be avoided.

The well made object or utensil is that which not only appeals to the eye but also performs well in use. For instance a good-looking but fragile cutlass is useless and is dismissed as '*ewà ojú àkàrà*' (superficial beauty). An object can be ornamented to increase its visual appeal. Ornament is *onà*,[29] the artist is *on'sonà* or *onísé onà*. The carver is *gbénàgbénà* (carver of ornaments) or *agbégilére* (he who transforms wood into images). Excessive ornamentation is abhorred as it leads to confusion (*wúruwuru*).

In architecture beauty is sought not only in the quality and strength of materials, but also in size and decoration. Yoruba buildings can be divided into three main types, i.e. the compound (*agbo-ilé*), the palace (*àfin*) and the temple (*ilé orisa*).

The *agbo-ilé* is a rectangular compound with a central courtyard, housing an extended family or members of a patrilineage. All inmates are responsible to the *bàbá-ilé* (father of the house), the oldest member, who is in turn responsible to the chief of the ward. The chiefs in turn are responsible to the *oba* (king) whose *àfin* is the largest and the most richly ornamented in any Yoruba town. More often the *àfin* has many courtyards each of which has a specific function, but the largest serves as a forum for the town's people, especially on ceremonial occasions.[30] The façade of the *afin* is distinguished from the generality of the surrounding houses by sculptured wooden posts and doors, as well as by gable roofs above the main entrance. These features can also be found, though on a smaller scale, in some *ilé orisà*. This correspondence between the palace and the temple and the fact that only the *oba* and the priest can use beaded objects underscore the divinity of the *oba*, who is otherwise known as *Igbá'keji Orisà* (deputy of the *orisa*). Apart from priests, who have important shrines in their houses, no commoner would dare to decorate his house with elaborately sculptured posts or doors. Thus in architecture, art and space are used to enhance the image of divine authority.

In the performing arts artistry is judged by the quality of presentation. A good singer or poet is judged not only by the quality of his voice but also by the quality of his composition. A dancer is assessed by the quality of his body movements and steps, as well as by how well he can anticipate the beat of the drums. Youths dance rather vigorously, while elders dance with restraint to emphasize the dignity of old age. An elder who dances like a youth (for no justifiable reason) is called '*àgbàlagbà akàn*' (the shameless) or '*àgbàlagbà t'onmi lángbálángbá*' (the gambolling gentleman),[31] while the youth who dances like an old man is taken for a weakling. Short people are often regarded as the best dancers; hence the appellation *akúruye'jó* (short to match the dance). Although men generally prefer the plump or the average-sized woman, the short woman is held to be an asset to her husband in the dancing arena: '*Obirin kúkúrú y'oko rè l'ójo'jó*' (the short wife brings honour to her husband in the dancing arena). However, the dance of the plump woman is considered to be more graceful than that of the slim or skinny woman. When a fat or plump woman throws all of herself into a dance every movement is echoed by the fleshiness of her form, especially the buttocks, which play a prominent part in the dance of the women. A similar attempt by the skinny woman often results in gyration (*lílótipàtipà*), which is not regarded as ideal.

Artistry in music is recognized in the individual's ability to 'talk' with the drum and in the over-all rhythm or melody of an orchestral performance. However, the individual is seldom singled out for praise in an orchestral performance, although the lead-drummer is often regarded as the brain behind a good performance.

By and large music, dance and song are complementary in Yoruba culture. They enhance the quality of life, serving as a means of solemnizing occasions of joy or sadness. Music is also used to honour the gods so that they shall be favourably disposed to the society.

In essence Yoruba aesthetics is a quest for happiness in life. *Ewà* is pleasant to behold and experience; *Iwà* fosters social harmony among men, thereby generating law and order in society.[32] Since more premium is put on 'the mean' than on extreme or facial beauty—which in any case is given only to a few—Yoruba aesthetics affords almost every individual the opportunity of being admired once he has *iwà*. For to possess *iwà* is to be beautiful.

REFERENCE NOTES

[1] This paper is based partly on field work and partly on my own experience as a Yoruba.

I am particularly grateful to Chief M. A. Fabunmi, the Odole Atobase of Ife, Drs. 'Wande Abimbola and 'Sope Oyelaran, Messrs S. O. Babayemi and 'Toso Eluyemi and many other people who contributed to the ideas expressed in this paper.

[2] Literally, 'facial beauty'.

[3] Literally, 'inner beauty'.

[4] The prayer *'K'aiyé wa dun lo b'óyin'* simply means: 'may our joy *approach* the sweetness of honey'.

[5] For instance, see Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drunkard*, New York, 1953, pp. 18–22.

[6] E. B. Idowu, *Olodumare, God in Yoruba Belief*, Praeger, 1963, p. 154.

[7] *Ibid.*,

[8] A beautiful rat.

[9] A. Fajana, 'Some Aspects of Yoruba Traditional Education', *Odu, University of Ife Journal of African Studies*, 3, 1, (1966), p. 25 fn. 5; quoting from Denrele Obasa, *Awon Akewi, Iwe Keji*, Ibadan, 1933, pp. 91–2. See also R. F. Thompson, Black Gods and Kings: Yoruba Art at UCLA, 1971, CH3/1.

[10] Idowu, *Olódùmarè*, p. 155. See also Fajana, 'Some Aspects of Yoruba Traditional Education', p. 25.

[11] However, one may wish a pregnant woman a very beautiful child: *ki orisà ya'nà're ko ni o* (May the *orisa* (Obatala) fashion for us a good work of art). See Idowu, *Olodumare*, p. 72.

[12] To some Yoruba, Owólewà (money is beauty) to others omolewa (having children is beautiful). But a good majority will ask: 'kini t'alafíà?' (What is as valuable as good health?).

[13] This is not necessarily the same as Olúwa, Our Lord.

[14] Idowu, *Olódùmare*, p. 43.

[15] 'Wande Abimbola, 'The Yoruba Concept of Human Personality' in *La Notion de Personne en Afrique Noire*, Colloques Internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, No. 54 Paris, 1971, p. 75.

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[20] Abimbola, 'The Yoruba Concept of Human Personality', p. 80.

[21] Thompson, *Black Gods and Kings*, CH3/2.

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] See F. Willett, *Ife in the History of West African Sculpture*, London, 1967, and Thompson, *Black Gods and Kings*, CH18/1.

[24] For more on women's dresses, see E. De Negri, 'Yoruba Women's Costume', *Nigeria Magazine*, LXXII (1962), pp. 4–12.

[25] For more on men's dresses, see E. De Negri, 'Yoruba Men's Costume', *Nigeria Magazine*, LXXXIII, pp. 4–12.

[26] See also Thompson, *Black Gods and Kings*; *passim*.

[27] Palm-oil is regarded as *èro* (pain-reliever), while *osùn* is a popular cosmetic.

[28] However, this is not to say that *Esu* does not do good. His worshippers regard him as one of the most generous *orisà*.

[29] Decoration is *àrà*. Both *àrà* and *onà* are more or less synonymous.

[30] For more on Yoruba architecture, see G. J. A. Ojo, *Yoruba Culture*, Ife and

London, 1966, pp. 131–57 and *Yoruba Palaces*, London, 1966.

[31] However, since agility in old age is admired, such an elder can be praised by some Yoruba.

[32] For more on the concept of good character among the Yoruba, see 'Wande Abimbola, '*Iwàpèlé*: The Concept of Good Character in Ifa Literary Corpus', paper presented at the Seminar *Yoruba Oral Tradition*: organized by the Institute of African Studies, University of Ife, Nigeria, January 1974.

LES PLAISIRS DES CLERCS: BARTHES'S LATEST WRITING

Christopher Norris

BARTHES'S LATEST erotics of literature[1] somewhat relaxes, but never contradicts, the formal severity of *S/Z*. The theme is still the 'scandal' of polymorphous sexuality, now examined more in its affective than its formal-textual connections. Barthes seeks a 'materialistic theory of the subject' (p. 97). To this end he views literary texts as objects of sexual appeal, variously formed to entice, or at least accommodate, the diverse predilections and perversions of their individual readers. 'Plaisir du texte' is the general, describable part of Barthes's topic. But within this hedonistic discourse 'le plaisir' is soon distinguished from 'la jouissance'. Criticism can speak meaningfully of the former, which still has enough of cultural and personal 'security' about it to ground the critic's speech in an intelligible 'practice' (p. 82). 'La jouissance', on the contrary, displays 'le plaisir en pièces; la langue en pièces; la culture en pièces' (p. 82). It perverts the rhetorics of culture, the values and orders of representation which the 'discourse' of society, its language as well as its sexual mores, strives to maintain. 'La jouissance' is an *intransitive* mode of pleasure (p. 83). Through the sexual metaphor this implies the privacy, the inturned satisfaction, of sexual fulfilment. In language it corresponds to that destruction of the 'phrase' as the term of well-formed language—ultimately of Aristotelian logic—which Barthes conceives as the function of *jouissance*. Sartre was unable to formulate any social function of poetry other than the shared narcissism of self-communing poet and reader. Barthes says much the same of the novel, not however as the last resort of socializing theory but precisely as the leading point of a subversive textual semiotics.

Barthes's sexual metaphors involve an *immoralism* quite distinct from, say, Marcuse's blend of hedonism and rational social praxis. Marcuse foresees a cognitive community, classless and of undivided faculties, in which 'sense' and the 'sensuous' (aesthetic) would be recombined with 'sense' (rational), and end all aspects of repression.[2] Thus the aesthetic is

the 'mediating concept', rejoining the cognitive and appetitive in a new non-dominant relation. The merging of faculties depends on the *community* of human relations in which, and only in which, it is achieved. The ethic of mutuality, the beneficence of liberated sex, goes with the epistemology of Marcuse's prediction. Barthes on the contrary insists that the benefits of *jouissance* are strictly 'pour moi' (p. 24), and that sexual liberation through literature finds its model in the projected private fantasies of the Marquis de Sade. The possible ideal of cognitive community is finally overthrown by Barthes's constant appeal to the individualist immoralism of Nietzsche.

For some reason, Barthes complains, we tend to believe that pleasure—particularly 'plaisir du texte'—inclines to the right wing of politics. Those on the right mistrust the type-cast leftist intellectuals, while these in turn regard all 'hedonistic residues' as somehow reactionary. So there develops on one side a mythology of 'heart versus head' and on the other an ascesis of intellect divided from the senses.

Barthes's tactics are subtle. One reflects that in his work to date the ascetic intellect has always justified its procedures as a formal critique of encrusted bourgeois myth. Thus in *Mythologies*: '. . . the more a system is specifically defined in its forms, the more amenable it is to historical criticism'.[3] Barthes therefore follows the linguists Saussure and Hjelmslev in retreating—on principle—always from 'substance' to 'form'. The seeming paradox of a Marxist critical formalism is by-passed, or at least suspended, by declaring it a preparatory clearing away of bourgeois unrealities. So when Barthes observes in *Le Plaisir du Texte* that life on the left isn't all cold reason he seems to be righting the balance and returning the suspended content—its meaning and history—to Marxist theoretical praxis. But the substance restored to form, in this latest text, is not the substance held at a distance in *Mythologies*. There it was the suspect historical 'realism' of Zhdanov, and the 'instantaneous reserve of history' called up by the bourgeois, which justified the act of suspension.[4] Neither 'history' nor any qualified conception of the 'real' takes their place in Barthes's revised perspective. The affective sexuality of literature, its subversive character whatever the historical conjuncture, its appeal to the reader therefore as 'le sujet anachronique' (p. 99), outside history and reason—these factors of textual 'plaisir' are simply a sexual as opposed to an intellectual mode of satisfaction.

Barthes's ideally responsive reader is 'le pervers', submitting to total seduction. The text lays hold of his desires, and correspondingly betrays the author's, at a level deeper and less conscious than that of his 'subjectivity'. The nearest Barthes comes to locating this *in the text* is to suggest

(pp. 104/5) that a certain inflection or 'grain' of 'voice'—though not, certainly, of modulation as such—sets the tone of seduction. Considering the diatribes launched in *Tel Quel* against the metaphysics of 'voice' and of speech-as-origin, this seems an odd position for Barthes to take. But in this book he is necessarily playing with proscribed notions; reinstating the literary 'subject', though neutralized (as in this case) by considering his least distinctive *affective* organization. 'L'écriture à haute voix' (p. 104) is, Barthes stresses, a de-differentiated genetic quality of writing, not to be confused with any possible conveyed 'vocal' quality. The text as sexual object makes all issues of intention, or of the author's individuating character, wholly irrelevant.

The text is for Barthes a corporal form, 'un anagramme du corps', 'un corps érotique' (p. 30). But the 'body' of his comparison is again the non-individual, the sub-rational sexual register of a limited range of seductive options. The crudity of Barthes's physicalism is shown the more clearly by comparison with Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. For Merleau-Ponty the body is the seat of an indefinitely multiplied 'praxis' of codes and symbolic systems, 'inscriptions' of culture and creative 'significations' of the responsive individual. Like Barthes, Merleau-Ponty finds an image of the literary text in this idea of the human body. Writing produces a system of signs whose 'internal articulation' reproduces the 'contours of experience', generating a 'syntax in depth' which refashions both the resources of language and the shapes of perceived reality.[5] The inherent generosity of this conception, the scope of the allowance it makes to the writer's imagination, stand in marked contrast to the repertory of obsession, neurosis and paranoia which makes up creativity on Barthes's account. Phenomenology considers the body the locus of *intentionality*—of perceptions which enter into cognitive experience and themselves confirm, as constituted by, the inherent connectedness, the historicity and rationality, of experience itself. In this capacity the body, though it cannot *account* for the full scope of creative engagement with the world, can be shown to be indispensable to its understanding. It alone is the vehicle of 'symbolic systems' whose intrinsic meaning 'exceeds the signification in "natural" gestures', but which would 'collapse' if once deprived of the articulation of the physical organism.[6] On this view the body supports and affects (in both senses) reason and the practices of culture within which 'reason' is genetically defined. For Barthes on the contrary the body is the seat of an irrational play of erotic codes valuable in so far as they deny, by indifferently subverting, the institutional codes of reason and history.

Of course the effort of literary structuralism, following the example of

Lévi-Strauss, has been to deny or discount the implicit rational humanism of phenomenology. In this sense it is beside the point to criticize Barthes on these or related grounds. But the sensitive place in Barthes's exposition is plainly the suasive piece about 'right' and 'left' conceptions of literature; and here, I think, Barthes's theory faces him with all kinds of contradition.

The name most frequently evoked in *Le Plaisir du Texte* is that of Nietzsche. He appears mostly in support of Barthes's 'intransitive' immoralism, i.e. the subversive thesis that private hedonism by questioning the 'natural' public morality best serves the long-term project of liberation. Barthes presumably finds support for his position in Nietzsche's assignation of morals and reason to the realm of the pragmatic, the useful or desirable but entirely *relative*. Nietzschean immoralism, or rather the relative, self-determined morality of the dominant individual, goes with the repudiation of reason as the effective determinant of a public morality evident to the mind as a condition of social existence.

Not the mere reference to Nietzsche, but all that this reference entails, places Barthes's text on the 'right' of philosophic politics. Hedonism, of course, has no peculiar political attachment; but irrationalism certainly has, and the use of Nietzsche's arguments in this direction is unambiguous. Habermas takes Nietzsche for his last example of philosophy led by its un-self-reflective positivism into pragmatical or psychologistic definitions of truth.[7] Positivism adheres to the naïve epistemology founded in the heuristic procedures of science. Consequently it denies itself the reflective moment, or self-critique of cognition, installed unchangeably in philosophic tradition since the time of Hegel. For want of this critical resource, unable to see beyond the huge but inadequate self-evidence of positive science, Nietzsche retreated into irrationalism. Strangely enough the most similar case in the theory of literature, or the most explicit, has been that of I. A. Richards in his early writings, beginning with *Science and Poetry*.[8] Richards reasoned that science had taken over, or rendered incredible, the old, animistic and anthropocentric Nature, the immemorial subject of poetry. Poets were now cut off from truth at least of the objective, scientific kind, and had therefore to utilize the beneficial *fictions* which imagination might supply to an impoverished world-view.

In Richards's as in Barthes's theory this alienation from reason produces an *affective* criticism interested in an ordering of responses at the 'emotive' or sexual, not the rational, level. Such was Richards's para-behavioural psychology of satisfied 'impulse' described in his *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1927). Richards and Barthes could hardly be more dissimilar

in training and temperament. But they both embrace a kind of irrationalism, and for much the same reason. Richards—to extend the parallel—can also be found denying phenomenology in a brief and dismissive note on Husserl in *The Meaning of Meaning*.[9] Indeed for all their ideological difference Richards's behaviouristic account of the 'sign-situation' actually resembles the extreme physicalism and exclusion of intentionality in Barthes's later theory. Richards's 'affective fallacy' was of course frowned upon by American formalist critics, but was soon adapted to their purpose. The idea of an 'equillibrium' of impulse, the standard of healthful complexity in poetry, transferred easily enough to the 'objective' structural correlates of irony, paradox, etc. And on both sides of the equation questions of 'intention' (as the New Critics wished) could be ignored, as comprising an order of epistemological claim which criticism had neatly by-passed.[10]

These, then, are the implications of Barthes's irrationalism. He passes from a formalistic to an affective criticism without the least sense of resistance, or indeed logical inconsistency. Structuralist thought lacks the *mediation*, or capacity for 'self-reflection', which characterizes phenomenology and would make evident to that philosophy the irrationalism (Husserl's 'crisis') involved in conceiving either 'structures' emptied of content or 'contents' referred wholly to psychology. Husserl diagnosed this as the coming crisis of European philosophy. And at this point his critique joins in effect with that of contemporary Marxism, especially where—as in the early Lukacs—the phenomenological content has not been overridden.

Lukacs effectively predicts the methodology of structuralism as a late symptom of 'unmediated' bourgeois thought: on the one hand 'a multitude of irrational facts', on the other 'a network of purely formal laws' cast over them; but with no rational connection between them save the imposed pattern.[11] Praxis depends upon annulling this 'indifference of form towards content'. Class-consciousness in Lukacs's view is the series of *mediations* through which the 'immanent meanings' of historical reality are realised—meanings at present inherent in the 'objects' of bourgeois society, but 'objectively effective' only in the consciousness of the proletariat.[12] Thus for Lukacs, as for Marcuse, the idea of cognitive community goes inseparably with that of history and its determinations.

Again this is the kind of Marxist philosophy against which *Tel Quel*, as a movement, has pointedly revolted. But still a comparison and relative assessment on political grounds may be possible. Barthes's irrationalism splits exactly into the extremes of unmediated formalism and anarchic sensualism which Marcuse explicitly condemns. The subjective cult of

'scandal', which replaces the *historical* concept of revolution, contains a moment of nostalgia connected with its absolute dependence, as a gesture of desecration, on the proprieties it disturbs. Merleau-Ponty, in his essay 'On Eroticism', notes how exclusively mental and withdrawn is the Sadist cult in literature; divorced from action (like Sade in the Revolution) and 'too attached to what it denies to be a form of freedom'.[13]

Hence Barthes's restriction of his text, for the most part, to elaborating the theory of *plaisir* rather than *jouissance*. The paradox is recognized, and carried off perhaps more neatly than in *S/Z*, where Barthes's basically formalistic treatment of Sarrasine—the debt to institutional criticism—makes way now and then for a paragraph of radical comment disclaiming the formalist arrangement and proposing various *unrepresentable* tactics in reading. The notion of 'jouissance' is connected with the critic's almost scandalous ambition to go beyond formalism yet retain the worked-out detail of formal description. 'L'endroit le plus érotique d'un corps n'est il pas là où le vêtement baille?' (p. 19). In *S/Z* also the narrative 'dévoilement' as Barthes reads it has a likeness to the act of striptease. Barthes is less interested in the way the plot unfolds, as discovered to rational intelligence, than in the way the text *as object*—the object of criticism, read and re-read—presents and withdraws an elusive, seductive plurality of forms to the fascinated critic. Sarrasine is a sculptor, and Barthes finds an engaging paradox in this craft. The imagined figure is somehow present in the stone, yet gradually revealed; whole in the shaping intention, yet won only by labour. So with narrative: the teasing suspension of always-immanent meaning.

Barthes has an essay in *Mythologies* on the subject of the Paris striptease.[14] Its end, he decides, is not 'to drag into the light a hidden depth, but to signify, through the shedding of an artificial and incongruous clothing, nakedness as a natural vesture of woman'—a return after all to 'a perfectly chaste state of the flesh'. These complications of the politics of eros reappear in *Le Plaisir du Texte*. Barthes can find no guard against bourgeois 'mythology' save the complete denial of the 'natural', the personal, the *interiority* of body and expression. The 'scandal' of the striptease is its ultimate return to bourgeois 'chasteness': the prevention of the body's self-violation by timely provision of a myth of 'natural' origins or regained innocence.

Sexual imagery seems to suit with subtle reflection on the problems of literary form. Henry James can be found, in his preface to *The Figure in the Carpet*—the most deliberate critical puzzle among the short stories—indulging sexual jokes of the oddest and crudest kind.[15] *Lolita* is a prolonged

play of novelistic possibility on the themes of erotic fantasy. But Barthes's semiology of the topic, made to satisfy an equivocal clerkly politics, turns out as a rather shifty dandyism. The book asks to be judged on the consistency of its politics. In which case the Nietzschean logic of Barthes's denial of rationalism, communal ethics, intelligible history—his sacrifice of these to what amounts to private subversive fantasy—totally undermines his official politics. As with Lawrence and Eliot, the appeal to sub-rational affects invariably looks back into history to construct a myth of lost origins. In *S/Z* Balzac's text is made the paradigmatic just-post-classical: a celebration of disturbances in the bourgeois systems of exchange, but still tied to them— as to the formal mode of explication—in order to find utterance. Laura Riding in 1928[16] described literary classicism as 'an underlying historical posthumousness', and Romanticism as the corresponding 'underlying pre-natalism'. These are the poles of literary myth between which *Sarrasine* is stretched, or sandwiched. The 'classical' and the 'modern', 'plaisir' and 'jouissance'—these are merely two expressions, the formal and the affective, of the mythical opposition which serves for history in Barthes's criticism. This use of myth is exactly the opposite of the theme of cognitive community, which enables Marcuse and Lukacs to predict a *progressive* series of adjustments in the relations of history and consciousness.

This is to mount a critique of Barthes's radical solipsism from a Marxist as well as a phenomenological point of view. Barthes specifically *misuses* the language of phenomenology, using Husserl's term 'epoché' (p. 102) to signify, not the epistemological suspension of the 'natural' real—a means of reaching rational self-evidence—but the indiscriminate sexual 'perverse', questioning all values. This marks the exact point of Barthes's departure in modern philosophy. His case is typical of the position taken up collectively in *Tel Quel*. The dogmatic rejection of phenomenology, or the *reflective* portion of the human sciences, has caused the philosophies of structure to produce a naïve epistemology. The 'subject' is nothing but the affective register of the structures in which he is inscribed. Merleau-Ponty, on the contrary, refers to the 'other face' of structure, its 'lived equivalent' or incarnation, without which the 'ideal models' of theory can only trace out a 'formal' genetic sequence.

The materials for a full, historical critique of 'structure' exist in Habermas's *Knowledge and Human Interests*. From a particular, formalistic understanding of Marx, through the proto-semiotics of C. S. Peirce to the anti-naturalism of Nietzsche, Habermas's description of the troubles of positivism applies strikingly to the philosophic contradictions of modern French structuralism. As a commentary on these problems,

pushed to their limits of Wildean paradox, *Le Plaisir du Texte* holds pleasures all its own.

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[15] Henry James, *The Art of the Novel* (1934).

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WITTGENSTEIN ON THE BEAUTIFUL, THE GOOD AND THE TREMENDOUS

Roger A. Shiner

(1) PROPOSITIONS and questions about the Good, the Beautiful and the Tremendous are mentioned by Wittgenstein but twice in the *Tractatus*. At 4.003[1] they are regarded as a sub-class of the class of philosophical propositions and questions. Such questions are *unsinnig*, nonsensical;[2] they lie *outside* the bounds of sense. The remarks in 6.4 ff. are about ethics, but they apply to aesthetics too (6.421—'Ethics and aesthetics are one and the same'). The theory of meaning and epistemology of the *Tractatus* generate the conclusion that the propositions and questions of aesthetics are nonsensical. The movement of thought is quite clearly in that direction. They are nonsensical because they fail to satisfy some antecedently laid down conditions for what it is to have sense. Wittgenstein does not start by a piece-meal presuppositionless examination of aesthetic propositions and questions, and infer from that that they are nonsensical. The details of his argument are familiar and I will not rehearse them here.

During the 1930s Wittgenstein revised a great deal of his thinking about the matters discussed in the *Tractatus*. In particular he came to reject the Tractarian view that words are names whose meaning is their bearer, that propositions have sense according as they picture reality, that this 'picturing' is a matter of projection rules expressed by a formal calculus, and that there is only one kind of meaning. For all of this he substituted a theory of meaning as use and emphasized the thought that not only is there a 'multiplicity of language-games' but that this multiplicity 'is not something fixed, given once for all' (*Investigations* 23). He has therefore kicked away the supports of the *Tractatus* view of the propositions and questions of aesthetics, and one would as a result expect his later views on aesthetics to be structurally as different from the earlier as are his later views on language. The purpose of this paper is to show how far this is true and to offer some thoughts as a result on the logic of aesthetic judgements. My thesis in general is that the later aesthetics is confused and

inconsistent, that this inconsistency results in part from residual influence exercised by the *Tractatus* aesthetics and that the inconsistency is unnecessary. This last point is important, for some commentators have denied this, others have chosen to preserve the wrong part, and others have not seen the later view to be inconsistent. I shall outline a view of the logic of aesthetic judgements which, in my opinion, preserves what is right in the later aesthetics and rejects what is wrong; this view will make use of the theory of meaning and epistemology of Wittgenstein's later work.

(2) What, then, is the meta-aesthetic view of the later Wittgenstein? Our main sources are the *Lectures on Aesthetics* and Moore's report of Wittgenstein's lectures in the 1932–3 academic year, some of which dealt with aesthetics. The inconsistency is not, I think, hard to bring out. There are two quite different kinds of remark in the *Lectures*, both of which have definite echoes in other later works. There are on the one hand various passages where the emphasis is on the affective aspect of aesthetic judgement, and on our inability to make sense of certain aesthetic[3] questions or to give reasons for certain sorts of claim. There are on the other hand passages where the emphasis is precisely on the way in which we *do* give reasons in aesthetics and how aesthetics *is* different from the expression of a personal reaction or opinion, or of a physical sensation. Let me now set these two strands out by quoting some passages. I shall call these two strands the Subjective Strand and the Objective Strand, though I do not intend these names to have much philosophical clout.

THE SUBJECTIVE STRAND

Early on in the *Lectures* (I. 5), Wittgenstein applies a favourite methodology of his later work (cf. *Investigations* 77), and attempts to elucidate the aesthetic language-game by considering how one learns 'good', 'beautiful', 'fine', etc. A child learns these 'roughly as interjections'. The word is taught as and is an expression of approval. If one wanted to find out what words in the language of a strange tribe corresponded to these, one would look for 'smiles, gestures, food, toys. . . . If you went to Mars and men were spheres with sticks coming out, you wouldn't know what to look for' (*Lectures* I.6). 'Words such as "lovely" are first used as interjections. . . . A lot of people . . . use the word . . . as an interjection' (*ib.*, I.9). Later he talks of the impossibility of giving reasons in certain cases. If Lewy's landlady says 'This is hideous' and Lewy says 'This is lovely', 'all right, that's that' (*ib.*, I.36). Moore records Wittgenstein as saying that if by giving 'reasons' you make another person 'see what you see' but it still 'doesn't appeal to him', that is 'an end' of the discussion (315).[4] Finally, there is this section, which I will quote in full:

> When we talk of a Symphony of Beethoven we don't talk of correctness. Entirely different things enter. One wouldn't talk of appreciating the *tremendous* things in Art. In certain styles in Architecture a door is correct, and the thing is you appreciate it. But in the case of a Gothic cathedral, what we do is not at all to find it correct—it plays an entirely different role with us. The entire *game* is different. It is as different as to judge a human being and on the one hand to say 'He behaves well' and on the other hand 'He made an impression on me'.
>
> (*Lectures* I. 23; original italics)

There is a non-cognitivist sound to all of these passages, that judgements about the Good, etc., are primarily interjections, that aesthetics in the end simply rests on the individual liking or not liking certain things, that at the highest level one can't talk of reasons or appreciation. The tremendous things either impress us or they don't; but one cannot discuss the matter as one can a particular door or musical passage.

THE OBJECTIVE STRAND

By contrast there runs all the way through the *Lectures* and Moore's notes another theme, which emphasizes how peripheral in Wittgenstein's opinion the above cases are to the business of aesthetics. That has to do with not a simple expression of approval in a subject-predicate form, but an 'enormously complicated situation' (*ib.*, I.5), 'a very complicated role . . . in . . . a culture of a period' (*ib.*, I.25), 'ways of living' (*ib.*, I.35). He indicates the 'directedness' (*ib.*, II.18; cf. I.7) of aesthetic reactions, that they give works of art faces (*ib.*, I.10). Possessing aesthetic discrimination is not merely having an affective reaction. A person who has judgement is not a person who says 'marvellous' at certain things (*ib.*, I.17). A Russian who does not know English may be overwhelmed by a sonnet, but he does not know what is in it (*ibid.*). 'We use the phrase "A man is musical" not so as to call a man musical if he says "Ah!" when a piece of music is played, any more than we call a dog musical if it wags its tail when music is played' (*ibid.*). The realm of Art is quite different from the realm of utterance of delight, even though the same expressions, facial and verbal, may occur in each (*ib.*, II. 3). According to Moore the question of Aesthetics, Wittgenstein said, was not 'Do you like this?' but '*Why* [Moore's italics] do you like it?' Aesthetics tries to give *reasons* [Moore's italics]. This view of Aesthetics is parallelled in casual *obiter dicta* of other later works. In the *Investigations* Wittgenstein mentions how we can talk a great deal in Aesthetics about a fine difference, and of the ramifications of the words used, how a word has a 'field of force' (p. 219e). In *Zettel*, in almost direct conflict with the Subjective Strand, we find:

> You must ask how we learnt the expression 'Isn't that glorious!' at all—Noone explained it to us by referring to sensations, images or thoughts that accompany hearing! Nor should we doubt whether he had enjoyed it if he had no account to give of such experiences; though we should, if he shewed that he did not understand certain tie-ups. (170)

I call this the Objective Strand because it seeks to emphasise the analogies rather than the disanalogies between aesthetics and other recognisably objective or cognitive enquiries. Aesthetic judgements are about works of art, they give information about the nature of works of art. These judgements can be supported by reasons. The business of giving reasons is a matter of referring to the features of works of art and the comparison of the work in question with other works. Such remarks may *mutatis mutandis* be made about shoes, ships and sealing wax, cabbages and kings.

(3) The textual evidence is, then, indisputable. Wittgenstein does seem to have two pots on the stove at once, with very different and seemingly incompatible things bubbling away in them. This fact has puzzled commentators who have noticed it. I shall review their reactions, but I do not think any of these are adequate. Osborne first of all ([1], 386) represents Wittgenstein as offering a straightforwardly emotivist view of aesthetics; so interpreted, Wittgenstein is seen as adding little to Ogden and Richards in *The Meaning of Meaning*. Osborne rightly objects to this view, using arguments similar to those which I have attributed to Wittgenstein in unravelling the Objective Strand. Osborne, however, interprets the Objective Strand strictly in terms of those forms of art where there are certain precise rules to be followed, e.g. proportions in certain styles of architecture, rules of harmony, rules in certain styles of fashion. There is textual justification for this, and therefore for Osborne's complaint that Wittgenstein is wrong to assume these cases are typical of aesthetic criticism. However, as I hope to show in section 4, the resources of Wittgenstein's general position are less limited than he seems to have thought. In another paper, Osborne underlines ([2], 211) the oddity of Wittgenstein remarking that there is an end to the discussion when he is also saying aesthetics is not about simply what appeals. But no account of the oddity is offered. The 'discussion comes to an end' remark is surely of a piece with the emotivism referred to in Osborne's first paper. But this is to explain, not to explain away, the oddity. In short, then, Osborne's view is that Wittgenstein's position basically is Emotivist, and that the Objective Strand is only made to seem plausible by appeal to a specialised and a-typical set of cases. Wittgenstein is disobeying his own prescription and offering us a one-sided diet of examples (cf. *Investi-*

gations 593). This view, I shall argue, underestimates the potential of the Objective Strand.

Barrett also (162) recognizes the element of subjectivity in Wittgenstein's position deriving from satisfaction being the ultimate criterion of correctness. He recognizes also that the countervailing emphasis on the directedness of aesthetic judgements, the way we compare one work of art with another in formulating aesthetic judgements, and the need for aesthetic judgements to reflect the features of a work of art gives 'a certain objectivity to aesthetic explanation' (163). Moreover he rightly recognizes that to say that there is nothing to be done when one person is dissatisfied with a work or an interpretation with which another is satisfied is 'to undermine the whole basis of Wittgenstein's account' (*ibid.*). He ends his paper by remarking that 'there are complexities to this question which Wittgenstein has not explored, though he may have offered some means of exploring them'. I prefer here Barrett's optimism to Osborne's pessimism: I hope to show both Barrett's claims are true.

Margaret Paton related the view she finds in the *Lectures* more explicitly to the *Tractatus* view of aesthetics. She interprets Wittgenstein to be saying in the Objective Strand that philosophers should be silent about aesthetics because what there is to say about aesthetics comes at the level of judging correctness within an antecedent framework of critical standards. *That* activity is the business of 'artists, critics and art historians' (165). The job of philosophical aesthetics, aesthetics proper, would, if there was one, lie in comparing and contrasting these systems of critical standards. But such a task would take one beyond the bounds of sense. The tremendous transcends language and categories of judgement (166), which is why (cf. *Lectures* I.23) we cannot be said to appreciate it, and why judgements to the effect that things are good, beautiful, fine, lovely, etc., are mere expressions of emotion, gestures of approval or bursts of applause. While this certainly is a simple and elegant interpretation, I cannot see how it is adequate. As Barrett emphasises, reasons which are valid reasons only in terms of some antecedently accepted set of standards are but quasi-reasons. The concepts of reason and rationality, at least as they are normally used in philosophy, are intended to represent something which is coercive *per se* and not coercive only to those who accept a certain set of assumptions. The realm of reason is contrasted with the realm of such things as faith, commitment, decision of principle, postulate, 'blik', etc. Thus to make Wittgenstein's view consistent by interpreting the Objective Strand in terms of this weak kind of 'quasi-reason' is to deprive Wittgenstein's argument of any interest.

The three commentators mentioned so far have all regarded the Sub-

jective Strand and the Objective Strand as at least *prima facie* incompatible. Coleman on the other hand, having identified the Subjective Strand with the *Tractatus* view, interprets the passages containing the Subjective Strand as merely giving the unfortunate but false impression that Wittgenstein still held the *Tractatus* view. This false impression is totally outweighed by the Objective Strand (259). Coleman rightly takes Wittgenstein's analysis to be directed against the nameless but real band of philosophers who think that when one has said it about 'This is good' and 'This is beautiful' one has said it all (260). He takes Wittgenstein's view to be that such remarks are simply interjections, but are 'of minor inportance in understanding what aesthetics is about' (258). The Objective Strand is what matters; we quietly ignore the Subjective Strand as not being what it's all really about, rather as we do the Junior Fellow who on his first appearance at High Table insists on talking shop. But this will not do. Of minor importance or no, are such remarks aesthetic judgements of some kind or other or aren't they? If they are, then Wittgenstein *does* have two different accounts of aesthetic judgements—not only different but incompatible, and we want to know why. If they are not, then we also want to know why, for it seems like an arbitrary and question-begging legislation. I conclude therefore that the Subjective Strand cannot be simply ignored; some account must be taken of the points made therein.

(4) This paper has been so far mostly negative and historical. I shall try from now on to be more positive and philosophical. Let us begin with a feature of the early sections of the first *Lecture* which has escaped notice so far. When Wittgenstein refers to how we first learn 'good', 'beautiful', etc., and to their use as interjections, he is not, as everyone so far has thought, trying to isolate part of the language-game of aesthetics as she is played, but a *primitive* language-game. That is to say, the language-game in which certain aesthetic terms are used purely as interjections stands in the same relation to aesthetics proper as the slab-games of the *Blue and Brown Books* and the *Investigations* stand to our language proper. The primitive language-games are not intended to *be* part of our language, but to be artificial constructs which illuminate our language by offering in an exaggerated form features which are present in our language but lost to greater or lesser degrees in the 'complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing' (*Investigations* 66). When, therefore, Wittgenstein tells us that the use of these terms as interjections is a primitive language-game which (cf. *Lectures* 1.7) has the crucial difference from aesthetics proper that in it what the words are about does not come up, he is not, as he was in the *Tractatus*, offering an

'emotivist' or non-cognitivist theory of aesthetics. He is simply saying that in this primitive language-game we see a feature of aesthetic judgement, recognition of which feature is essential to reaching philosophical understanding of aesthetic judgement; however, the primitive language-game is crucially inadequate as a model *per se* of aesthetic judgement.

This line of argument is important, and serves to blunt the immediate force of the idea that there is an overt reproduction here of the *Tractatus* theory of aesthetics. But it is still scratching about on the surface. Three questions remain: (i) What is this mysterious feature which the primitive language-game illuminates? (ii) Wittgenstein's claims about the chain of reasons coming to an end arise in a different context than the primitive language-game, so we are still left with them as standard-bearers for the Subjective Strand. (iii) Wittgenstein, contrary again to his own general *caveats* about being mesmerized by forms of words and the craving for generality, seems to think that it is essential to the 'big' aesthetic terms to be used as interjections in the primitive game. That is, he seems to be saying that to say 'This is beautiful' is *per se* only to express emotion. Yet clearly the difference, if there is one, between the primitive language-game and aesthetics proper is going to lie in the *whole performance* of Hanslick, Frye and Leavis on the one hand and Lewy's landlady or Archie Bunker on the other, and not in the words used. Northrop Frye will not cease to be a man with judgement just by using the words 'fine' or 'tremendous', nor Lewy's landlady become one just by using the expression 'arrogant abstraction' of Canadian architecture and the expression 'garrison mentality' of Canadian art. However, if one takes this line, as I do, then one certainly owes a story about how Lewy's landlady fits into a general picture of aesthetics and an account of the phenomenon of the chain of reasons coming to an end. I shall try at the very last to produce a story.

As the last remark suggests, questions (ii) and (iii) are, in my view, much of a piece; they raise very similar issues. I shall come to them in a moment. I mention the first question only to lay it aside. Though I hope to make some constructive remarks about aspects of the analysis of aesthetics, that is not one of the aspects. I shall simply state here that I believe Wittgenstein's point to be that aesthetic awareness and discrimination essentially involve the affective side of human nature, and that I believe this point to be correct. It is integral to the aesthetic response that it involves what one may broadly characterize as the emotive or affective part of man. Coming to appreciate aesthetic value implies being moved to feel in some way. I shall say very little more, though I hope that a fuller account will appear fairly soon elsewhere. I shall simply mention four

points to turn aside obvious objections. (1) I do not see this to be incompatible with the emphasis on directedness. Recent work in the philosophy of mind has shown emotions and attitudes to be essentially and not merely contingently cognitive. (2) The implication involved here is Austinian implication[5]—'A implies B' means 'By saying A I give it to be understood that B'. My claim is not that any aesthetic statement strictly implies a statement about emotions. (3) 'Feeling' is a notoriously slippery term, encompassing at least the two widely differing sub-classes of occurrent and dispositional feelings. A full account of this issue must take note of these differences. (4)[6] Aesthetic indifference may be a proper response to mediocre aesthetic value, whereas moral indifference is never appropriate to the moral 'ought'. The role played by indifference in aesthetic evaluation must be carefully considered.

What, then, of points (ii) and (iii)? The key term in this context is the notion of 'rule'. The *Tractatus* conceives of rules only in the sense of rigid, formal, logical rules—the rules of a logical system or of musical notation (4.0141). The justification of choosing one particular set of rules for the application of certain symbols over another set is something it does not make sense to ask for. But 'although there is something arbitrary in our notations, *this* much is not arbitrary—that *when* we have determined one thing arbitrarily, something else is necessarily the case' (3.342; original italics). It is arbitrary whether we decide to write sonatas or symphonies, sonnets or psalms. But that decision made, it becomes necessary that, to be correct, we follow certain rules of rhyming and compositional structure. Indeed if we wish to use a certain harmonic scale, then we must follow certain rules. Now, as Osborne has emphasized ([1], 386), the rules Wittgenstein talks about in the *Lectures* and in terms of which he explicates the notions of 'right', 'correct', 'reason' as they apply in aesthetics are precisely this kind of Tractarian formal rule, and it is surely true that restriction to this kind of rule will impoverish aesthetics. Notoriously, however, the later Wittgenstein spends a great deal of time and energy trying to argue that this Tractarian understanding of 'rule' is inadequate. In analysing the 'necessity' of logical and mathematical inference, Wittgenstein tries to show that rules of inference do not in and of themselves bind the reasoner; only the practice of which the rules are a part does that, and practices are a more malleable kind of thing. In particular, Wittgenstein insists throughout the *Investigations* and other later works, the rules of a normal, natural language are simply not (except for some specialized cases) expressible in terms of the formal rules of a *Tractatus*-type projection system. What it is to learn a language is not at all like what it is to learn a set of formal rules for the manipulation of a set of symbols; it is not

merely like, but precisely is joining a community of human beings and taking on their form of life. This requires the absorption of more than formal rules. But what one absorbs in such a process Wittgenstein still wants to call 'rules'—'What one acquires here is not a technique; one learns correct judgements. There are also rules, but they do not form a system, and only experienced people can apply them right. Unlike calculating rules' (*Investigations* 227e).[7]

In this latter quotation we have expressed a view which will do very well as a view of aesthetics and which will meet, I think, the objection Osborne rightly has to the *Lectures* view. The Objective Strand rightly insists that any account of aesthetics must make room for the notions of judgement, taste, discrimination. The *Tractatus*-influenced Subjective Strand cannot by itself do this. Lewy's landlady is as well able to express emotion at works of art as Northrop Frye and, if that is all there is to aesthetics, then no room is left for the idea that the latter has some knowledge, skill or power of judgement necessary to critical appreciation which the other does not have. But it is insufficient to interpret this extra element simply in terms of the ability to apply and recognize instances of the application of formal rules. Nor, picking up something else in that quotation from *Investigations* p. 227e, is critical appreciation merely the mastery of a technique. It might seem as though it was—one learns how to use in an impressive and seemingly profound fashion certain stock phrases, patterns of speech, expressive powers. One might imagine that the view of the *Lectures* would accept simply this. Once the technique has been mastered, one is a critic; the chain of reasons comes to an end with the ability to use the technique. But our quotation insists on yet something more, viz. correct judgement. One is learning to apply certain terms in a context of affective response, but not merely this. One is learning to apply them correctly. Moreover this does not come through learning by rote, but by experience.

We are able then, I suggest, to divorce the Objective Strand's insistence on the phenomenon of correct judgement, expertise, knowledge of what is there, and so forth from the accompanying reference to certain formal rules of harmonics, architectural proportions, fashion styles and so forth. This is the key to understanding the relation between the Objective Strand and the Subjective Strand. The two elements are not divorced in the *Lectures* because, or so it seems, Wittgenstein was still under the influence of the *Tractatus* view of aesthetics. This is so, even though as a matter of biographical fact those lectures came at a time when in his later philosophy generally Wittgenstein had shaken off that influence. Why his view of aesthetics and ethics should be out of step is a question of

biography I know nothing about. We can interpret the 'correctness requirement', if one may call it that, in terms of the kind of rule the later philosophy of language calls for. There, to be correct amounts to being not merely comprehensible in terms of but in accordance with the rules for the application of the relevant concepts. But these rules are to be given a 'family resemblance' or 'case-by-case' analysis. The rules which bind the speaker of a language are in the end simply the collection of cases which are possible instances of a given particular term. This is so even when the terms in question are the predicates of aesthetic criticism, appreciation and interpretation. To make an aesthetic claim, to give a work of art a face, is to locate it among a family of cases. One can consider whether such a judgement is correct by considering whether the case in question really does belong with the cases not in question to which the claim assigns it. The man of judgement is the man who can do this; he knows what the conditions for membership of that family are; he knows what to look for in assessing a new claim to membership; he knows how to illumine those conditions themselves in the abstract and their applications in the concrete for the benefit of others not so knowledgeable.

A favourite model for this type of informal logic is the law. Rules of law are not formal like rules of logic, and the practice of legal argument consists of the presentation of cases and the attempt by counsel to give the case in question a face. Wittgenstein made use of this parallel (Moore 315), but again in a misleading manner. He had at the back of his mind, he said, the idea that aesthetic discussions were like discussions in a court of law where you try to clear up the circumstances of the action which is being tried, hoping that in the end what you say will appeal to the judge. Barrett (162) accepts this parallel at face value, thinking it to be part of the Subjective Strand as a consequence. Coleman, on the other hand, having explicated the Objective Strand, claims it to be a consequence of that line of argument that 'it is both false and misleading to compare . . . aesthetic discussions to disputes in cases of law' (260). Since he deals only with the *Lectures* and not with Moore's notes, he may be pardoned for not facing the conflict in finding in Wittgenstein an argument against a position which Wittgenstein espoused. The parallel is illuminating for in each case we have something which is properly a process of reasoning which can end up in correct and incorrect claims and one where we may talk of judgement, expertise and knowledge. Wittgenstein and his two commentators are wrong, however, to think that the parallel is correct in so far as in both cases we can only try in the end to appeal to the judge, the spectator, the fellow-critic. Of course,

some jurisprudents have argued that the law is subjective and in the end rests on the judge's non-rational decision; but this is a false picture. It depends on the assumption that since reasoning in the law is neither deductive nor inductive, it is not reasoning. The later Wittgenstein exposed and undercut this assumption, though, it seems, once again his mind blocked the application of his arguments to aesthetics. But they do apply.

The point here can be extended even to cover another well known obstacle to those who proffer any talk of rules and reasons in aesthetics; I have in mind the emphasis on the so-called uniqueness of works of art. It may very well be true that every work of art is unique in the sense of being an unrepeated constellation of properties. Every work of art may even be unique in the sense of being an unrepeated instantiation of each generic property it has. The point is that emphasis on this causes problems only for those who wish to represent the logic of aesthetics in terms of the application of formal rules on the *Tractatus* model. Such rules indeed are applicable only to avowedly repeatable instances. But such rules run into ultimate metaphysical trouble even there. There is the well known dilemma that if one who proposes to justify his judgement on a particular case by subsuming that case under a general law intends ahead of time that the law apply to the case, his claim is circular; and if he does not, the applicability of the law to the case in question has not been demonstrated. The only alternative way out of this dilemma to scepticism is to recognize case-by-case argument as a legitimate form of argument and even proof.[8] Then it will be the similarities and differences between the cases offered in the argument and the case in question that settles the correctness of the claim. If in point of logic the matter rests on similarities and differences, then the essential uniqueness of each case becomes irrelevant. Wittgenstein remarks in the *Lectures* that aesthetic puzzlement 'can be cured only by peculiar kinds of comparisons' (III.9), that 'what we really want, to solve aesthetic puzzlements, is certain comparisons—grouping together of certain cases' (IV.2). He is absolutely right in this metaphysically important remark, and the appropriateness of the groupings is what matters, the similarities and differences, not whether they appeal.

But appeal, as I have conceded, has a major role to play in aesthetics, and surely the Wittgenstein of the *Lectures* is quite right, there are certain questions about the comparative merits of grand styles, questions which cross boundaries between art media, cultural and temporal boundaries, which are meaningless. A certain kind of architecture appealed to the Victorians; it does not appeal to contemporary man. Some like heavily

improvised free-form music, others do not. If the expression of a reasoned preference for one of these is an aesthetic judgement, then what can one say except that the style, the medium, the work, *appeals*? I do not wish to deny the phenomenological appropriateness of the thought that here the chain of reasons comes to an end. I wish to try to wrest this thought away from the metaphysical trappings of the Subjective Strand. Perhaps we cannot argue about the Beautiful, the Good and the Tremendous, but only about the thematic richness of one quartet as against another, the technical skill of one painter as against another. This does not mean that the Beautiful, the Good and the Tremendous are beyond the bounds of sense and the reach of rules. It means instead that part of this language-game is the rule: Here, it is a matter of what appeals; here, certain requests for comparative justification have no place. In blackjack at a certain point the dealer is required to take another card, but his opponent is not—he may choose whether to take another card. Do we say that only the dealer's action is determined by the rule? No, the opponent's action is also—it is determined that he may choose. So also there may be certain contexts where there are formal rules and our judgements of aesthetic correctness are here mechanical. There may be other contexts where they are not, and we recognize that if I prefer Bach to Beethoven, then if I 'see what there is to see' in Beethoven and still prefer Bach, so be it. But I can't just have a preference for Beethoven over Bugs Bunny. We think that the phenomenon of these situations of appeal, preference and choice imply a Subjectivist theory of aesthetic value because we look at them only through the spectacles of the Tractarian system. According to that, we make our fundamental preferential choices and only after we have done that do validity, logic, rationality, judgement, proof and the rest come into play. I am proposing instead that we look at the matter from the point of view of the epistemology implicit in Wittgenstein's references to comparisons and groupings of cases. A very large number of things can be grouped together under the headings of the Beautiful, the Good, and the Tremendous—but not just anything. So many things can be grouped that no one can be an appreciator of all of them. We have our preferences and our likings, born of personal and social conditioning. But when we show the appropriateness of our personal groupings by means of comparisons, by reference to similarities and differences, we have carried out a rational procedure; we have met the demands the Objective Strand rightly puts upon us. Only the excessive stringency of the Tractarian demands leads us to seek for more.

I shall end with Lewy's landlady. In the first *Lecture* four different cases are offered to us by Wittgenstein: the dog who wags his tail, the Russian

who does not know English, Lewy's landlady and—whoever he or she is—the *bona fide* appreciator of art. We can think of these as arranged on a continuum with the appreciator on one end and the dog on the other. It is clear that the dog cannot be said to have aesthetic awareness, and the Russian only restrictedly—he can only respond to some things in the poem, the rhythm and sounds. But how does Lewy's landlady fit in? Does she fall inside or outside the line marking off those with awareness of aesthetic value and those without? There is no simple answer to this. If I can show why, I can summarize the issues I am trying to raise here. What rules out the dog and to the appropriate extent the Russian is their inability to satisfy the crucial 'directedness' requirement. An aesthetic response is as much cognitive as affective, and the cognitive element opens up questions of the appropriateness of the response. The Russian and the dog may respond affectively, but they do not know what it is they are responding to. The Russian and the dog cannot answer '*Why* do you like it?' (cf. Moore 314). If one locates Lewy's landlady inside the dividing line, then one brings out that she differs from the appreciator by a difference of degree, not of kind. To do that sheds light on what the difference of kind is. But on the other hand it obscures the gap on the continuum between the appreciator and Lewy's landlady, and thus the fact that the difference of degree is still a philosophically important difference. The landlady may be a peripheral case of an appreciator as compared with the Russian and the dog; they are not even peripheral cases. But she is so peripheral that to say simply she is an appreciator obscures what is essential to the central case, a certain experience and a certain range and depth to one's judgement. Suppose, alternatively, one locates the landlady outside the dividing line, along with the Russian and the dog. Then of course the difference between her and the appreciator becomes one of kind, and thus the features essential to being an appreciator are the better illuminated. But the danger of this move lies in the fact that it obscures the logic of 'good', 'tremendous', 'fine', 'nice', 'beautiful', 'lovely', etc. For, as Wittgenstein remarks, these are the characteristic adjectives of the landlady as opposed to the appreciator. Thus one may the more easily be tempted to think that the logic of the terms is to be used as mere expressions of approval and not as cognitive predicates. While it is true, however, that these terms are extremely general, and thus evoke comparisons and collect together cases only at a very high level of generality, there is no reason to deny that at that level this is precisely what they do The difference between these terms and 'dainty' or 'dumpy' is not one of fundamental logic but of scope and generality.[9] Perhaps they are too broad in scope to be of any use except

when coupled with biographical information about their user's tastes and preferences, but this does not make them subjective. There is ultimately no justification for the divide between general aesthetic terms and specific aesthetic terms which is integral to the Wittgensteinian confusion I have been discussing in this paper. The irony is that elsewhere Wittgenstein himself showed this.

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[1] I am using the Pears–McGuinness version of the *Tractatus*, and the standard Blackwell editions of other works. With the exception of Part II of the *Investigations* all references are to paragraph numbers.

[2] Remember here the important contrast between *unsinnig*, 'nonsensical', and *sinnlos*, 'lacking a sense'. Tautologies and contradictions (cf. 4.461–2) lack a sense, but are part of the symbolism. So they do lie within the bounds of sense.

[3] It should be noted that, as is rightly pointed out by (e.g.) Osborne ([1], 389), Wittgenstein deals more or less entirely with criticism specifically rather than Aesthetics in general. None the less, I shall continue to follow Wittgenstein in using the general term for the specific discipline.

[4] Rhees reports Wittgenstein as later expressing parallel sentiments about ethics. In 1942 Wittgenstein said to Rhees that we don't know what a decision between alternative ethical systems would be like; we do not know what a person who asks for such a decision is after. It does not make sense to ask which system is the right one (23). In 1945 he said that one who says Christian ethics is the right ethical system is making a judgement of value which amounts to *adopting* (original italics) Christian ethics (24).

[5] Cf. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford, O.U.P., 1962), 46–52.

[6] I owe this point to my colleague Allen Carlson.

[7] Though this is about one particular language-game, it will do for his later view of language in general. Note that one alternative version of *Lectures* I.25 is along these lines—'To describe a set of aesthetic rules fully really means to describe the culture of a period.'

[8] Cf. here Frank Sibley's notion of 'perceptual proof' (*Phil Rev.*, LXXIV (1965), 135 ff.), though this is not the place for a detailed discussion of this notion.

[9] Cf. R. W. Newell, 'Ethics and Description', *Philosophy*, XLIII (1968), 360 ff. for a similar analysis of 'good' in ethical contexts.

BOOK REVIEWS

Speaking of Art. By PETER KIVY. Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague. pp.viii+136.

F. N. SIBLEY has recently argued that 'aesthetic terms'—terms such as 'delicate' and 'garish' which are used to describe the aesthetic character of an object, its character as an object of aesthetic interest—do not have 'conditions' for their application ('Aesthetic Concepts', *Phil. Rev.*, 1957). According to Sibley such terms name features that, while dependent in some sense on the non-aesthetic features of an object, are not determined logically by the presence of those non-aesthetic features, and can be discerned only by someone with sufficient perceptiveness or 'taste'. Thus while a painting may be delicate *because of* its pale colours and slender shapes, its delicacy cannot be conditioned by these—or by any other—non-aesthetic features, which is to say that no non-aesthetic description, however complex, can give a *logical* basis for a description using aesthetic terms. Mr Kivy connects this thesis with another, perhaps more ancient one: the thesis that aesthetic interest is an interest in the appearance of things, so that aesthetic terms are used to describe the way things sound or look. (From this he thinks it follows that we could not make the distinction between a work of art's *being* say, delicate or unified, and its only appearing so. But surely this does not follow: colours are features of the appearance of things, but we can readily distinguish, despite this, the real from the apparent colour of an object.)

The notion of an 'aesthetic' term is not entirely clear, and indeed if Mr Kivy's arguments are successful, it is less clear than Sibley would have us believe. None the less, we are offered certain examples, including 'balanced', 'delicate', 'elegant', 'sad', 'characterful', 'restless', and—Mr. Kivy's favourite—'unified'. The strategy of the book is as follows: first Mr. Kivy argues that a term may be governed by conditions, even though there are no necessary-and-sufficient conditions for its application: his point being that predicates like 'intelligent', which are from the epistemological point of view complex, may be governed by families of conditions. No one of these conditions need be necessary for intelligence, but some groups of them may be logically sufficient. He then goes on to argue that at least some aesthetic terms—in particular the term 'unified'—are condition-governed in this sense. He defends this theory against the objections brought by Sibley and further attacks the suggestion that 'aspects' are not properties, concluding therefore that it makes no difference to his case if aesthetic terms should be held to ascribe aspects. Mr. Kivy concludes with certain remarks about objectivity, pointing out that even if there is disagreement over the usage of some aesthetic terms, this does not show that such terms do not have an objectively valid basis for their application.

It seems to me that Mr. Kivy is right in his claim that Sibley has not refuted the 'condition-governed' model of aesthetic terms. Indeed it is difficult to imagine a refutation, just as it is difficult to imagine a refutation of the corresponding theory in ethics, the theory that is sometimes known as 'ethical naturalism'. On the other hand the view that a predicate is,

or is not, governed by conditions—whether it be the 'good' of ethical theory or one of Sibley's 'aesthetic' terms—can certainly be supported. But it can be supported only in the context of some general account of moral or aesthetic judgement. In failing to give such an account Mr.Kivy renders his views implausible. In particular, his description of musical unity in terms of monothematic structure must strike the reader as extremely arbitrary. Mr. Kivy mentions the fact that the main theme of the first movement of the *Eroica* symphony recurs no less than thirty-seven times. He asks: 'If *any* movement of that length were to have its main subject recur thirty-seven times, would we still be logically free to deny that it is unified and declare it characterless? I suggest that the answer is an emphatic "No".' (p. 47.) I imagine that few musical people would have difficulty in producing a counter-example to this claim. Take a short and shapeless melody out of Frank Sinatra, repeat it thirty-seven times in unrelated keys, punctuate its occurrences with devastating gongs and cymbals and sharp glissandi on discordant harps: if Mr. Kivy insists on using the term 'unified' to describe this effect, is he not courting the charge that his concept of unity is of no aesthetic interest? He will reply that there are other senses of 'unity', some descriptive, some 'evaluative' as he says. But why should we countenance such a proliferation of ambiguities? Would it not be better to try again?

Among the most interesting of the 'aesthetic' terms are those that have both an aesthetic and a non-aesthetic use. 'Sad' is among these; others are 'dark' and 'restless'. Now according to Eric Blom Mozart's fortieth symphony has a dark and restless quality. Mr. Kivy imagines the case of a listener who hears the work for the first time, with this description in mind, and comes to the conclusion that it is indeed 'dark and restless'. Mr. Kivy suggests that this listener has 'made use of his previous experience of dark and restless works—his samples and precedents, if you like—from which, albeit vaguely and unconsciously, he has distilled conditions for the application of these terms'. (p. 53) But suppose the listener had never heard a dark and restless work before. Would this forbid him from applying these descriptions to the *G minor* symphony and knowing what he means by them? I think not; for it is the listener's understanding of the *primary* usage of these terms that enables him to understand their application to a symphony, and in their primary usage these terms name properties that no symphony can have. How *could* the listener have first derived conditions for the application of these terms from listening to works of music? Perhaps Mr. Kivy would be prepared to say that 'dark' and 'restless' are ambiguous, meaning one thing when applied to music and another thing when applied to effects of light and action. If so, it seems strange that we should wish to use precisely *these* words here. One may have little sympathy for Sibley's theory of aesthetic perception, but Mr. Kivy's alternative seems no better able to deal with these fundamental problems. Perhaps there are words, classified inadvertently by Sibley among the aesthetic terms, that are applied to works of art in a condition-governed way. But why should we be interested in them? It comes as no surprise to find Mr. Kivy subscribing to the view that we might 'be able to describe works of art in aesthetic terms and not be able to appreciate or evaluate them'. (p. 58) If this is so, why talk of 'aesthetic' terms?

It is in considering the problem of words like 'dark' and 'restless' that a philosopher might turn his attention to the notion of an 'aspect'. For when I call a piece of music 'dark' I am reporting an experience, describing how the music sounds to me, without implying that the music is (literally) dark. In just this way I may call a

picture a 'duck' with the intention of describing the way it looks to me, without wishing to imply that it is (literally) a duck. This seems to suggest that the notion of an aspect—in particular that notion employed in the description of ambiguous and indeterminate figures such as the duck-rabbit made famous by Wittgenstein—may cast light on the problem of 'aesthetic' terms. However, Mr. Kivy wishes to deny that this notion can be used to refute his view; he argues that ascriptions of aspects are themselves governed by conditions, and hence that it would prove nothing to show that aesthetic terms were really used to ascribe aspects to things. Unfortunately, it is unclear what Mr. Kivy means by an 'aspect-ascription'. There are at least two possibilities: he might mean expressions of the form 'it (what I see) has the aspect of a duck', or he might mean expressions of the form 'it (what I see) is a duck'. Both of these can be supported by reasons, and in fact by the same reasons; but this does not show that they are governed by conditions in the quite special sense that implies the possibility of logical proof. The first is uncongenial to Mr. Kivy since it suggests that aspect-ascriptions are reports of experiences. The second must also be uncongenial since it is clear that a picture with the aspect of a duck is *not* a duck, and *a fortiori* that there can be no logically adequate basis for the application of the term 'duck' to a picture. Mr. Kivy seems not to be wholly aware of this difficulty, for in discussing another picture with a double aspect (the Skull-lady) he says that 'the abundance of skull-making features in the Skull-lady guarantees that it is a skull' (p. 103), and he intends this as a proof that at least one aspect-ascription is governed by conditions. But of course the picture is not a skull; rather, it has the *aspect* of a skull. But to say this is to say something about the way it appears, and surely I can recognize the presence of 'skull-making features' without being constrained by *logic* to recognize this aspect?

Mr. Kivy does not succeed in demonstrating that there are terms that are both usefully described as 'aesthetic' and also governed by 'conditions'. Perhaps there are such terms, but without a theory of aesthetic interest it is unlikely that we shall know how to find them.

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Johann Elias Schlegel—A German Pioneer in Aesthetics. By ELIZABETH M. WILKINSON. Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt. 1973. pp. 148. D.M. 13.30.

THIS GERMAN reprint of a book originally published in 1945 by Basil Blackwell of Oxford contains the revised version of Professor Wilkinson's Ph.D. thesis, augmented by a preface to the new edition. The subject of her monograph is not the well known Romantic critic August Wilhelm Schlegel, but his uncle, Johann Elias Schlegel (1719–49), who wrote, apart from dramas and comedies, several works on dramatic and aesthetic theory. Professor Wilkinson's study well deserves its return into circulation not only for her exemplary methodical analysis of the aesthetic questions and answers to be found in J. E. Schlegel's books, but also for the illuminating and fruitful way in which she brings the viewpoint of an English student nurtured on Anglo-Saxon aesthetic writings of the twentieth century to bear on the eighteenth-century ideas of the German author.

In opposition to the then dominant poetic theory of Johann Christoph Gottsched, who judged poetry solely by its imitative closeness to nature, Schlegel stressed the importance of forms in art and upheld its right to non-naturalistic expression. Although still adhering to the imitation theory of art, he recognized that art must necessarily be different from

life because it is executed in a medium of its own. If the dramatist chooses verse as his medium, it is just as wrong to hold it against him that real people do not speak in verse as it is wrong to blame a sculptor for making statues without the colouring which people have in reality. It is not only that the artist cannot achieve a greater similarity to nature than the medium will allow; it is even incumbent on him to transform, in his art, the reality he wishes to imitate. Just by departing from nature art becomes more convincing than nature itself. The aim of art is not to deceive the spectator with an illusion of reality, but to furnish him with a moving experience detached from real life.

Through his insight into the fundamental difference between art and life Schlegel belongs to the initiators of a trend of thought which finds, via Moses Mendelssohn, its culmination in the pertinent correspondence between Goethe and Schiller and which is taken up again in modern aesthetic writings, e.g. by Edward Bullough. By examining Schlegel's principles in the light of these later developments in aesthetics, Professor Wilkinson provides full justification for describing him in the title of her book as 'a German pioneer in aesthetics'.

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British Landscape Painting of the Eighteenth Century. By LUKE HERRMANN. Faber & Faber, London 1973, pp. 151. Ill. 120 black and white, plus 16 colour plates. £15.

THIS VERY handsome book represents the first full-length study of British landscape painting before the rise of Turner and Constable (a companion volume on the nineteenth century by the same author is in preparation) and has clearly been designed to fill a major gap in the literature. It traces the emergence of a native style out of the complex mixture of Netherlandish and Italian influences which dominated the early eighteenth century, summarizes the achievements of the chief masters (Richard Wilson, Thomas Gainsborough, Paul Sandby, J. R. Cozens, and the rest) and devotes separate chapters to the Topographical tradition and to those painters who travelled to Italy to see for themselves the arcadian scenery that had previously only been known at second hand through the old masters. The book closes with the work of men like William Hodges, who accompanied the explorers and empire builders to the South Seas, where the monuments on Easter Island proved very acceptable to the rising taste for the Picturesque.

For the discussion of landscape painting in any period one of the most crucial considerations must be the way each artist resolves the discrepancy between what he sees and what he knows, between his observation of the 'real' world and the conventional vision he acquires in the course of his artistic education. The most sensitive and profound artist painting landscapes in Britain in the eighteenth century was Gainsborough, whose development provides an ideal focal point for such a discussion. Describing the very early *Landscape with a distant View of Cornard Village*, in Edinburgh, Mr. Herrmann connects it—rightly I think—with Wijnants and Ruisdael, then goes on to say: 'But once this "art historical" impression is forgotten, the individuality of the composition, so definitely based on the "idea" of the scenery and sky of Suffolk, comes into its own.' (p. 93, author's quotation marks) But *whose* idea? The point is really rather an important one, and although it might seem perverse to pick it out in this way, it is in fact characteristic of the book as a whole. The author never quite comes to grips with any of the issues he raises, but flits from topic to topic. For example, on page 24 the mid-eighteenth-century

interest in seventeenth-century Dutch landscape is linked with 'the larger movement towards naturalism in art', and Hogarth's name is mentioned. One is left with an uncomfortable feeling that a number of complex issues are being tangled together and the whole thing then glossed over. After all Hogarth was a wholly urban artist, and his approach is surely *realistic* rather than *naturalistic.* (The author never discusses this distinction, which leads to a number of obscurities in his account.) Nor are the broader questions of *why* and *how* discussed in any depth. The taste for Dutch-inspired 'naturalism' is associated with 'mostly . . . middle-class collectors', and in case the reader needs further explanation, he is referred in a footnote to an article by John Hayes, while the author hurries on to landscape-gardening. Here we catch a glimpse of William Kent, laying out 'pleasure grounds' for Lord Burlington and the Earl of Leicester. Such gardens were something of a craze around the mid-century, but why? The author just says they were 'another aspect of the growing interest in the beauties of nature and of landscape . . . built to provide accessible relaxation from the pressures of city life'. (p. 25)

In general Mr. Herrmann avoids any consideration of social, economic or other wider factors in his analysis of the changes in taste during the century. Nor is he much interested in the *heritage* of the pictures he discusses. Sandby's *Timber Waggon* in Manchester (pl. 35A) is dismissed as untypical of its author, which it may be; yet it is surely central to that stream of romantic imagery, rich in broken textures, heavily twisted branches and tangled, strongly contrasted linear forms, that has haunted the British imagination, and which erupted in the 1820s in the work of Samuel Palmer, and in the 1940s with Sutherland and John Minton. Looked at more closely Mr. Herrmann's discussion seems imprecise, and the detailed connections he wants to establish fail to register. Too often he tells us that a picture has 'important divergences' from another without saying what these *are*, let alone discussing their significance. He relies constantly on vague adjectives: a 'striking' drawing, a 'remarkable' watercolour, a 'memorable' example, a 'fine' view, a 'telling' composition. In a similar way he tends to present us with items of information which seem to call for further discussion but are left uninterpreted. For instance the fact that the two major landscape painters of the period, Wilson and Gainsborough, were virtually unable to sell their late landscapes is merely noted in passing.

One of the most valuable features of this book is its fine collection of plates. It seems a pity, therefore, that so many of the pictures mentioned in the text are not illustrated. Instead the reader is referred to other books where reproductions may be found. To some extent this is unavoidable, but it means that the serious student will need to use this book in a good library, where he can sit surrounded by the standard monographs and where he also has access to some fairly scarce exhibition catalogues. Yet many of these are passing references, which could well have been omitted, leaving room to discuss fewer examples in greater depth. In fairness it must be admitted that the student will find useful information on a number of painters including Francis Place, described as the first British-born landscape artist proper, on the prolific John Wootton, on Francis Towne (a highly original water-colourist who met with little success in his lifetime and was virtually forgotten for a century after his death) and there is a useful critical summary of Paul Sandby, whose work has been inextricably confused with that of his pupils and followers.

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The Roman Stonecutter. An Introduction to Latin Epigraphy. By GIANCARLO SUSINI. Introduction by E. BADIAN. Translated by A. M. Dabrowski. Basil Blackwell, 1973, pp. x, +84. £2.25.

REGARDING EPIGRAPHY as 'the historical manner in which certain ideas were to be displayed for public and permanent information', Professor Susini wants to see its greater development in the belief that 'there is a whole history to be written here'. His immediate aim, however, in this slim volume is to deal with the mechanics of Roman inscriptions, not with their content nor with 'stylistic canons'. Such a study has been badly needed. There is no other enquiry into the designers and engravers at work, their tools and their methods, so the book deserves the welcome that Professor Badian forecasts for it. The reason that the subject has been so little investigated is no doubt the singular dearth of essential facts. What was recorded in classical antiquity about the details of the craft and its organization would not fill half a page of Professor Susini's book. He attempts therefore to glean what information he can from a careful examination of actual inscriptions, complete and half finished, aided by his knowledge of the practice of more recent times. Thus he can point to guide-lines, both horizontal and vertical, by which the stonecutter ensured a good composition. When marble replaced the softer local Roman *tufa* it was necessary to change from the scooped out 'string-cut' of the letters to a 'V-shaped trench' which culminated with 'shaded letters' of the first century B.C. A more finished effect was obtained down to the third century A.D. by rounding and polishing sharp edges *ad unguem*. The result was a subtle improvement allowing 'the effect of light to replace the effect of colour'. Colour was, however, frequently used. The third century B.C. tombs of the Scipios, for example, still show traces of their red colouring.

Meagre as are the recorded facts about an art that forms one of the major, if little regarded, legacies of the Romans to modern civilization, it is most useful to have the few things that can be said conveniently assembled in this pioneer study. Incidental comments are also notable, such as Professor Susini's remark that the public display of Roman inscriptions throughout a world, very few of whose inhabitants could read or write and most of whom had never seen writing, must have caused an impression that it is impossible to realize in modern times.

The author, translator and publisher are to be congratulated upon their most useful contribution to a subject that has for too long been neglected.

F. R. COWELL

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THE Hegel Society of America will hold its third biennial conference at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., Nov. 7–9, 1974. The conference will concentrate on the *Logic* and *Aesthetics* of G. W. F. Hegel. Tentative plans include papers by Sir Malcolm Knox, who has recently translated Hegel's *Lectures on Aesthetics*; and by Professor Otto Pöggeler, editor of *Hegel-Studien* and director of the Hegel-Archiv in Bochum, W. Germany. For full details as they become available, write to:

Professor Joseph O'Malley, Secretary
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Milwaukee, WI 53233

A new journal, *TEACHING PHILOSOPHY*, will appear twice yearly beginning January, 1975. The editors, Arnold Wilson and William Todd, invite papers concerned with any facet of the teaching of philosophy and the planning of philosophy courses and curricula. Reports on innovative efforts, articles on the training of teachers of philosophy, and assessments of the likely impact of new teaching ideas for the discipline, as well as notes and news items, are all welcome.

A regular feature will be critical notices of textbooks and surveys of materials available for teaching particular areas – recent texts in introductory logic, for example. Persons interested in contributing such notices, should write the editors, indicating their areas of interest.

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AESTHETIC OF THE PLAN

HAROLD OSBORNE
PRIMITIVE ART AND SOCIETY

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THE INTENTIONAL FALLACY REVISITED

A. J. ELLIS
INTENTION AND INTERPRETATION IN LITERATURE

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AESTHETIC OF THE PLAN

Heather Martienssen

THE ARCHITECT is first a planner. If he cedes this role, not only he but architecture is lost because no one else is trained for it. A plan may be copied or derived or adapted. In vernacular building the space-unit may be so simple, or have become so much of a tradition, that it is used with little variation; but architecture of any individual merit concerns the disposal of space and solid in relations determined by the architect. He designates this largely by means of his plan.

To an architect a plan is a drawing, and the term is rarely used in any other sense. There are as many plans as there are floors to a building. If simply 'the plan' is referred to, it is usually the plan at ground floor level (called the 'ground plan' by art historians but not by architects) or it is the first 'living' floor. In single-space buildings like churches or halls there is one main plan, though one may have additional plans 'at gallery level', etc., etc.

A plan, then, is basically a floor layout. But it is a little more complicated than this. By usage all doorways and other openings are shown on the plan, and windows too however high the sills may be above the floor. Often the construction of a vaulted ceiling is indicated on the plan, usually by means of dotted lines. A plan layout, or a site plan, shows the building in relation to neighbouring structures. Here fountains, gardens, trees, steps, statues, altars, benches, streams or anything else may be indicated that is relevant to the setting and appearance of the building in question. It has been suggested that the plan is a view of the floor, but it is not quite this; it is not a view of the building at all in the physical sense. An elevation is a straightforward description of an outer wall. A section is a view *into* the building with a wall or walls stripped away. But a plan is almost totally conceptual: it is the architect's view of his building. It is our view of the architect's intention.

Plans are drawn for different purposes. They form, together with elevations and sections, the working drawings which are given to the builder to instruct him in his procedure. These are usually heavily

dimensioned and annotated and accompanied by a detailed specification. Another kind of drawing that may be prepared is what is sometimes known as a 'black-and-white'. This emphasises solid in relation to space, and is the kind of drawing an architect may use for publication, or for his own satisfaction, or to show clients or future clients. It is also the kind of drawing made of buildings already in existence (where instructions are not needed). Both sections and elevations are an attempt to project what can be seen in the building itself. The plan, however, has no counterpart in the material sense, and describes a concept.

R. G. Collingwood attempted in 1938 to define the zone of existence of works of art. He would not admit the necessity of material existence but considered the work as purely conceptual, having its being (to simplify the theory) only in the imagination or 'mind' of the artist. Literature, for example, has no existence in space. It is apprehended by the senses of sound and sight through the presentation of symbols. It could be offered as a criticism of Collingwood that he is misled in trying to equate those arts whose manifestations do occupy space, or which cannot be substituted or presented by symbols, too closely with literature. Does an area of pictorial composition exist in the artist's mind before execution as completely as does a phrase or sentence in the writer's? Perhaps Collingwood means only that the 'desert island' artist, having completed his work, may tear it up without destroying it; that it will continue to exist as long as he does. Continuity *beyond* the lifetime of an artist must surely imply his having communicated it to someone else or (and this is surely an important point in relation to works of art) his having left it in a material form. Decision on this delicate point rests on the part played by communication in the activity of the artist. What remains in his mind only is possibly rather than potentially communicable; but even when the artwork has been put forward in a material form what is communicated to the 'Ideal Spectator' may well have no material existence, the 'material' merely helping to transmit. This is obvious in the case of the written word; not so happily taken in the case of painted canvas or chiselled marble.

Even if we accept, in despite of Collingwood (but with one eye on him), that a painting is not made until it is painted, its existence is a fairly simple situation: it was made by the hand of the artist, obviously in his lifetime, and will last as a work of art as long as it materially exists. The metaphysics (if we may call it that) of architecture is very much more complicated. Let us first accept that a building is something that is in fact built. But the men who lay the bricks do not create it much more than a typesetter creates literature; and yet there is a difference. Eric Gill (in *Art*,

1934) would have said several arts are involved. You may have a good book badly printed (or vice versa) because the art of book production is not the same as that of writing, but you cannot have a good *building* badly *built* because you are talking, or seem to be talking, of the same art (as you could not have a good painting badly painted). What you could have is a good architectural design badly built. But is even this what we mean? It would seem to indicate that 'architecture' means only preliminary designing (and thus vindicate the Collingwood approach); but in fact we admire the building in its actuality, we think of architecture as designing *with materials*, we are liable to consider the delicacy of carving as much a part of the Parthenon as the proportions and disposition of the columns and entablature. With buildings of certain periods, such as the Middle Ages, the material fabric *is* the building. Even in modern times it tends to be what the architect has achieved in terms of available materials that impresses or moves us. Sometimes the architect has been badly served by his executants so that the results are shoddy. To a great extent such a building is, whatever its designing, a failure. Shakespeare is not negated to the same extent by bad production, nor Beethoven by bad playing. This is because, by the nature of their arts, their works may be repeated many times. They may also both be known by reading. Whether a music score can convey to the reader anything approaching the actual timbre and power of an orchestra we must leave to the experts to tell us. Certainly as far as drama and poetry are concerned many, perhaps most, scholars prefer the script to the performance. It excludes, they claim, the human imperfections of the interpretative go-between, the actor. It leaves them with the pure dicta of the Master, which they may peruse and interpret in their own way (and at their own pace). The construction of a building is not a 'performance' in the same sense, and is to only a slight extent an 'interpretation'. Because there is *some* margin for misinterpretation, however, the architect's personal supervision of a building is regarded as important. Thus we do not forget that Rossellino, not Alberti himself, supervised the building of the Rucellai palace in Florence; that Sant'-Andrea in Mantua was largely carried out by another architect, Luca Fancelli; that Michelangelo did not live to see his dome built at St. Peter's (it was constructed 'after his design'); that Wren was the only architect to work on St. Paul's, though it took almost his lifetime to build. When the architect is not present considerable variation from what he intended may creep in. No one can be sure that it is *his* work, that it has been made with his approval. Also it has material existence. There is no repeat performance. It is a material object, existing in space.

But it does also exist in time, like music or literature, though it does

not move. It is the spectator who must move if he wants to have seen it wholly. For see it as a whole in one impact he cannot, however long a time is allowed. There is no one place from which he can apprehend it totally. To a certain extent this is true too of sculpture in the round, especially large sculpture, though the time required to view it from all relevant points is always much less. Even in a single room the spectator has to change position to see it, and when there are many rooms the time factor becomes highly significant. The thorough investigation of large buildings like Versailles, inside and out, together with their dependencies (such as the Trianons) can be too much for a continuous process and, like a novel, has to be set aside for completion another day.

But something of the total intention of the architect can be read from the plan, and there are many of us who would rather sit down with a plan, if we want to understand a building, than a photograph, or even a set of photographs, which, unless the building is very simple, tell us little indeed about it until we have studied the plan. Nor is the communication afforded by the plan confined to information, even information about the architect's visual or aesthetic intentions. 'The plan holds in itself', wrote le Corbusier (in *Towards a New Architecture* 1923)[4] 'the essence of sensation'. And though perhaps the connotation of 'sensation' is not quite the same in English as it is in French, it is clear that we are to regard the plan as being evocative and moving *in itself*. In his consideration of the plan as the 'generator' le Corbusier implied (and has always been understood as implying) more than merely that the plan is the key to the zoning and relations of the building. It emerges in his phrase as *determining* (and therefore afterwards powerfully reflecting) not merely its shape and space relations, but also its genre, its muscularity, its vitality, its total character as architecture. Furthermore in this role it may carry within itself that peculiar potency which gives rise to what traditionally has been called the 'aesthetic' response. It would be going too far to suggest that it was merely the relations of lines on paper (like an abstract painting) that evoked a response: clearly the ability to 'read' a plan at all implies a thorough understanding of what each part of the drawing represents; yet it would not be true either to maintain that the aesthetic response to a plan was solely a response to the visualization of what the plan implies in terms of the building as actually constructed.

The plan may be considered in a sense as the 'spoor' of a building. Just as an elephant will leave a large and positive imprint of its foot and a small antelope a delicate hoof-print, so a structure of heavy stone will show in its plan a far bolder silhouette than a light structure of glass and metal. Carrying the foot-print analogy a little further we may say that

it is not only size and weight that are indicated but other characters of the building; as with animals, the marks indicate hoof or pad, and by their distribution speed of travel, and thus possibly state of mind from tranquillity to terror. Often one may be confronted with a plan of an unfamiliar or still projected work, but one will usually recognize immediately the genre to which it broadly belongs and its approximate date. This knowledge will in its turn qualify our interpretation and reaction, so that it is almost inconceivable that an experienced viewer should read the plan in an unrelated imaginative vaccum. What is far more likely is that we shall be reading the plan of a building already familiar, either in itself or in its environment, and that the plan will therefore play its part as summation, or even consummation, of our experience of the work of architecture.

We have no architects' drawings from antiquity though drawings there must have been. Vitruvius refers to drawings included in his *De Architectura* to explain certain constructional methods; and although it is likely, from the precise nature of some of these explanation, that the architect of his day was more closely connected with the actual process of building than he normally is today, it would have been almost impossible to achieve precision in the vast scale of many buildings of antiquity without small explanatory drawings, even if they were sketches merely and not to scale. The sophistication and competence of wall decoration, at Pompeii for example, indicates that precision drawing as such would have presented no problems to draftsmen of the first century B.C. and probably even earlier.

The Romans favoured symmetry, which may have been partly for the effect of the general massing of such buildings evenly on either side of a central approach, and partly the pleasure of symmetrical patterning on the plan. The mirror image about a central axis of variously shaped courts, halls and, later, stairways and flanking wings and pavilions stayed with architects who had revived the Roman vocabulary of design into the nineteenth century and after, rendering sterile such perpetuations as competition drawings for the *Prix de Rome* and ultimately helping to make the term 'academic' a derogatory one. Though we may read these plans as two-dimensionally disposed, however, there is no reason to conclude that the designer was not visualizing the various parts of the building, quite properly, as three-dimensional spaces. Structure in classical building was fairly straightforward during the eighteenth century. Indeed one could criticize just this rather lazy acceptance as being a major factor of the architect's having lost a certain prestige, and certainly precedence, to the engineer.

Bruno Zevi has suggested in *Architecture as Space* that the cult of the *plan* was a dangerous aesthetic assumed especially by followers of le Corbusier, and there is no doubt that approval of his free-plan constructional system does transfer easily to a recognition of the admired qualities in the plans themselves, which may certainly lead to a sketching convention sometimes appearing to suppress structural and other detail and leaving the merest indication of supporting and screening systems. The clarity of articulation in some of his larger projects, like those for the League of Nations or the Palace of the Soviets, fostered in some of his admirers a development of plan-indication that was little more than a zoning diagram and probably got most of its response from a recognition of a brilliant planning technique and the symbols that refer to it. Nevertheless one cannot really omit the factor of an 'aesthetic of the plan', nor even wish to do so. The plan is the architect's thinking aloud about a volume construction. As he sketches he is defining space relations which are already real in his mind but become more whole as he defines them with his pencil. Eventually, so deeply is his special language understood, the drawing becomes not merely an explanation or an instruction but an imaginative communication in its own right. To a person understanding the language conveyed by the conventional symbols of that communication the reading of a plan is as direct as the reading of words, certainly as direct as the reading of a mathematical statement or a musical score by one sufficiently acquainted with the conventions used. Thus a plane of communication is established involving neither that understanding of plan-drawing conventions which a builder would translate into his appropriate materials, nor an abstract pattern such as would be found in, say, a modern graphic work, but something between the two; for although the architect has perfectly intended that the builder shall understand the conventions so that he can get on with the job, he also intends the disinterested viewer to find that complete aesthetic statement to which we have referred.

We have suggested that there are qualities in an architectural work that can only be perfectly apprehended by reading the plan. One is internal symmetry, especially on a large scale; for although one can sometimes 'feel' it, it is only possible to verify it by a study of the plan. In the same way a lack of symmetry, except in the immediate space in which the viewer is standing, is difficult and sometimes impossible to read internally. Another thing often impossible to gauge in a complex building is the relation of its parts, and even of adjoining rooms. A third quality, only possible to see in the most transparent of structures, is the structural system itself and the relations of space to solid. Again personal impact will

reveal certain important emotive and aesthetic qualities, such as the difference in space-occupation between the piers of Gothic and High Renaissance buildings. (S. E. Rasmussen, in *Experiencing Architecture*, 1959, discusses this.) More subtle factors, such as the movement intended by the architect for the viewer, or the vistas themselves, are sometimes experienced empirically but comprehended perfectly only after scrutiny of the plan.

Factors such as the above, which the plan renders comprehensible, are easily demonstrated. What is less easy to define is that sense of delight and of direct communication with the designer that can reward the peruser of plans. Plans that are beautiful or meaningful in this sense should not be capable of being projected into an unacceptable whole structure, for the reason suggested above, that the architect is not concerned with a two-dimensional design but a totality of which the plan is the indicator. This indicator can therefore not be satisfactory unless the project as a whole is satisfactory.

It should be pointed out that what we have referred to as 'aesthetic delight' experienced in the reading of a plan is not necessarily either a recognition of beauty in the simple sense, nor of approval of the individual work, though it might sometimes be both of these. It is evoked by the same kind of 'apprehension' that we have suggested accompanies acknowledgement of the artwork *as* an artwork, and especially of the validity of the artist's intention in that work. Thus we may respond to the cave-like character of a building though we do not like caves, or soar with a mounting staircase thought we do not like heights. To recognize totally the insubstantial quality of a glass house with minimal supports is not to endorse this as suitable or desirable. The world of art can impinge on every emotion, forcing us to accept an experience of imaginative potency which in every part is not necessarily a pleasant one.

PRIMITIVE ART AND SOCIETY

REVIEW ARTICLE

Harold Osborne

Primitive Art and Society. Edited by ANTHONY FORGE. Published for The Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Inc., by Oxford University Press. 1973. pp. 286. £6.50.

THE IDEA of the conference on Primitive Art and Society, a selection of whose papers is reproduced in this book, emerged from talks held in 1966 between Raymond Firth and Anthony Forge of the Department of Anthropology at the London School of Economics, and Robert Goldwater and Douglas Newton from the Museum of Primitive Art in New York; the conference was held in 1967 at Burg Wartenstein under the aegis of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. Its plan reflected the quickening of interest which has taken place during recent decades among artists, art historians and art critics in the significance of primitive art—that is the arts of cultures without writing—and the prominence which was given to discussion of basic concepts endows it with quite unusual importance for students of aesthetics. As Raymond Firth says in his Preface: 'Our main concern was theoretical analysis, not ethnographic description. . . . We did not shrink from tackling even such basic questions as: What is it that we call art? What does art do in society? What criteria of judgement can be best used in evaluating art?—as well as such more straightforward questions as the relation of art to ceremony or the place of artists in society.' As well as detailed analyses of arts from West Africa, New Guinea and Australia the book contains articles of more general import such as Edmund Leach on the problems of taboo in the appreciation of primitive art and Gregory Bateson on style, grace and information in primitive art. The book concludes with a paper by W. T. Jones (who went to the conference in the first place as an observer rather than a contributor) in which he analyses the latent and sometimes confused conceptual presuppositions implicit in the discussions. 'What puzzled me,' he says, 'was talk about the difference between art and craft; about whether there is, or can be, a society without art; about what

"minimal" art is: about whether "found art" is art; about the difference between "true" art and fakes; about the relation between art and language, between art and taboo. Much of this talk seemed to me inconclusive, and I became convinced that its inconclusiveness was due to implicit disagreements about the nature of art.'

Embarking upon a review of a collective volume of this sort one is faced with the inevitable dilemma of trying to say something about each contribution (in this case there are fourteen papers apart from the Introduction) in a space too restricted for substantive discussion of any or of confining the review to highly generalized and therefore condignly dull comment on the quality of the contributions, the standard of editing, and so on. I propose ruthlessly to abandon both these alternatives in order to ventilate at a little greater depth than would otherwise be possible, one question which is not only of profound interest to aestheticians but which overtly or implicitly runs pervasively through the book. This is the question of the conditions, or indeed the possibility, of cross-cultural evaluation in the visual arts.

Not only is this question of enormous practical importance but the lively interest it has for theorists is not difficult to illustrate. In an article published in the previous number of this Journal[1] Joseph Margolis argues that a work of art—as distinct from the physical thing in which it is embodied—can be identified as such or evaluated as a work of art only within the framework of the culture to which it belongs. He says 'the recognition that a given work of art actually exists and has the properties it has depends on the cultural tradition in terms of which a particular physical object may justifiably be said to embody a particular work of art and in terms of which critical practice will support particular attributions to particular works identified'. And even more explicitly, 'a work of art can be identified as such only relative to a favourable culture with respect to the tradition of which it actually exists'. Those who advocate less extreme forms of 'institutional' theories of art still maintain in one way or another that critical appraisals and appreciations are valid only within the societies which engender or foster the standards and habits of response which they reflect.[2] Views of this sort certainly have the allure of empirical congruence with the historical fact that artefacts which have found their way from distant cultures into European collections have been appraised by Western aesthetic standards or at the most (as in the case of the early German Expressionists) have aroused interest primarily for their romanticised exoticism. In a more subtle way during the first decade of this century proto-Cubist *avant-garde* artists found certain African sculptures exciting and stimulating not because they

exemplified accepted Western aesthetic traditions, and certainly not from an interest in their significance within the cultures from which they derived, but because of their congruence with certain creative trends in which these artists were themselves engrossed and because these carvings seemed to offer partial solutions to problems of form and representation with which they themselves were wrestling.[3] In a word, the interest which these carvings had for the artists (as distinct from later connoisseurs) was the kind of interest which might be felt for *objets trouvés*. And necessarily so upon this type of theory. For if works of art are 'emergent' within the aesthetic structure of a given society, it follows that we can apprehend and appraise the art works of another culture only in the terms of the aesthetic structure of our own society and to the extent that they accidentally conform to the aesthetic aspirations or standards of that society. It follows too from such theories that the anthropologist, being equally conditioned to the aesthetic mould of his own society, could apprehend the significance of primitive and exotic art works for the societies from which they derive only objectively and as it were from outside, by observing how members of that society behave towards them. Or if an anthropologist were so to immerse himself in the mental habits of an alien society that he could identify himself with the aesthetic attitudes of that society and appraise its art works by the standards inherent in it, then his judgements would be without meaning to members of his own society except in so far as the aesthetic traditions of the two societies accidentally overlapped.

Two centuries ago such views might well have seemed plausible. But the enormous expansion of *aesthetic* interest which has taken place during the last fifty years or more in the plastic arts, as well as the music, dance, theatre, etc. of remote cultures; the breaking down of aesthetic barriers implicit in Malraux's 'museum without walls'; the proven ability of members of other cultures—African, Japanese, Chinese, Islamic, Indian, etc.—to apprehend the ideas and motives of Western art, often adapting them to their own purposes and conflating them with their own aesthetic traditions;[4] the inter-cultural spread of certain 'modern' aesthetic movements in music and architecture as well as the plastic arts—all these phenomena seem to tell against the sort of cultural aesthetic isolationism that is implicit in at any rate the extremer forms of 'institutionalist' theory. We are not entirely debarred from aesthetic apprehension of the art products of Palaeothic man, of the Pre-Columbian art of Central and Southern America, although our main and almost our only source of information about the social conditions in which they were produced are the art objects themselves. In conformity with these and similar

considerations, some aestheticians, while they do not deny the importance of social influences in both the production and the appraisal of works of art, nevertheless maintain that they are corroborated and underpinned by 'universal' principles of aesthetic response, which belong to human nature as such in a way analogous to that in which the universal principles of logic are thought to belong to rationality as such. In the number of this Journal in which Joseph Margolis's article appeared Frederick E. Taylor argued in regard to music against the 'quasi-behaviouristic' view which he attributes to Leonard Meyer, that 'the content of any (musical) work is primarily dependent upon the listener's (socially) conditioned preparedness and response', advocating to the contrary the view that 'meaning and value in music are greatly determined by certain universal and necessary properties and that while we must agree that familiarity with the music of an individual culture, period or composer plays a part in its musical understanding, this role is neither a sufficient nor a necessary prerequisite for one's comprehension of a great portion of the meaning of any work'. He concludes that 'there do exist aspects of style and organization upon which understanding and meaning depend which are independent of any era, culture or period'.[5] In an earlier number of the Journal[6] Miss Ruby Meager proposes a two-tier explication of Wittgenstein's dogma that art is to be regarded as a 'form of life'. On the 'more obvious' level, she says, we find him reported as maintaining that 'to say what "appreciation" consists in we would need to know the whole social complex of activities and attentions within which such "appreciation" emerges . . .' She adds: 'The theory is that . . . only on the basis of such a grasp [sc. a grasp of the whole social complex of activities concerned. . . .] does the conception of "art" related to such a socially based "appreciation" acquire intelligibility and the title "work of art" a definite sense in which it operates not merely as a description applied with certain truth-conditions but also as a regulative idea in the thought of artists and public alike'. This is, of course an adumbration of a sophisticated form of 'institutionalist' theory. But she also traces to Wittgenstein, perhaps with somewhat over-enthusiastic optimism, a 'less obvious and more interesting, deeper level of reference to "forms of life" . . .' and she says: 'The theory that art operates also, and perhaps primarily, as a "form of life" at this basic level, a form of life shared almost universally, mediating and making intelligible the communication of experiences of all kinds—perceptions, sentiments, exaltation and disgusts—from the simplest to the most complex, would provide an explanation at least of the temptation to think of art as a "universal language". She suggests a resemblance between this idea and

'Kant's conception of the "universal voice" making intelligible the judgement of *beauty*' and she concludes that 'if we could draw together the traditional twin concerns of art and beauty, it might be because we could treat art also as a form of human life, as relating to a near-universal human responsive framework within which we can understand the intelligibility, of a non-utilitarian kind, of art as a distinct human activity'. In the infancy of modern aesthetics Hume maintained that despite differences of taste which are due to different social conditioning there is a 'natural' or 'appropriate' response of feeling and sentiment innate to human mentality as such and that this appropriate response will manifest itself in a sensitive and well-balanced person apart from 'defects' such as prejudice, ignorance, fatigue, etc. 'Some particular forms or qualities, from the original structure of the internal fabric are calculated to please, and others to displease; and if they fail of their effect in any particular instance, it is from some apparent defect or imperfection in the [inner] organ.'[7] Since Hume's crude and inconclusive but very pertinent essay there have not ceased to be aestheticians (Ruth Saw is a notable contemporary instance) who have maintained that the notion of 'appropriate' or 'proper' response is as fundamental to aesthetics in the domain of 'feeling' as logical validity is fundamental to the concept of reason. And the notion of appropriateness is in their thinking tied up with the idea of a substantial uniformity of response dependent on the basic structure of human mentality.

The conflict between these two basic attitudes towards judgements of taste, the attitudes of the 'institutionalists' and the 'universalists', is not easy to dispose of. Except in a trivial and tautological sense a solution could hardly be found by argument alone. What, for example, in the realm of aesthetics is, or could be, that fundamental 'agreement in judgements' which according to Miss Meager was found by Wittgenstein in the 'agreement in judgements' in spontaneous colour-discrimination? As Sibley suggested in a now seminal paper, and despite all subsequent discussion, the ability to recognise and discriminate aesthetic properties such as grace or elegance is far more unevenly distributed among the members even of relatively sophisticated societies than the ability to recognise and discriminate standard colours or shapes; and although both sorts of ability are necessary preconditions for coherent and determinable disputes, the discrimination of aesthetic properties stands in a very different logical relation to aesthetic appraisal from the relation of colour-discrimination to the possibility of determinable disputes about the colour of particular coloured objects. In disputed aesthetic appraisals we are not simply or mainly disputing the presence or

degree of particular aesthetic properties in aesthetic objects and there are still no known aesthetic properties which by their presence or absence or by the degree in which they are present can universally warrant a favourable or unfavourable appraisal. Nor, assuredly, can the conflict be solved on empirical grounds, or by any statistical evidence.

One could artificially create a near-uniformity of artistic assessment by the simple expedient of removing from the face of the earth by means of atomic devices all but one fairly compact primitive community with its own artistic traditions. But this would not satisfy the 'near-universal human responsive framework' of which Miss Meager speaks. What is meant by 'universalist' theories is something closer to a near-universality resulting from a normal and healthy, unimpeded activity of Hume's 'original structure of the internal fabric', a near-universality which somehow underlies the empirically manifested regional differences due to different social traditions and personality types. Yet it is not quite that for, as cannot be too frequently emphasized, the capacity or even the ability for aesthetic enjoyment and interest is very unevenly distributed even in sophisticated societies. There is a sense in which the epithet 'human' might be denied to persons incapable of following the most elementary reasoning process (even the insane can reason, although their premises may be deluded). But we could not sensibly expect much support in denying the full humanity of a person who was incapable of aesthetic discrimination or appraisal at the more elementary levels. We meet such persons, who may be eminent in their own spheres. If artistic activity (which is not the only manifestation of aesthetic inclination) is regarded as a specifically human mode of communication (a popular conception among recent aestheticians), then it is certainly a restricted and elitist mode in all sophisticated societies and probably—though to a lesser degree—also in primitive societies.[8]

But although empirical arguments cannot in the nature of the case prove or disprove either view, they may nevertheless wield an important suasive force in making one view or the other seem more reasonable. If, for example, one finds important and extensive congruences in areas outside the range of likely inter-cultural contacts, this must certainly help to enhance the reasonableness of postulating basic aesthetic uniformities common to the human animal as such; and if these congruences preponderate in relatively minor as well as major matters, their effect in determining the reasonableness of accepting the universalist view might well become paramount. It is in part for reasons of this sort that my own studies of Pre-Conquest Peruvian art, where significant contacts with the cultures of the Old World cannot reasonably be postulated,

have exerted a peculiar fascination. If on the other hand significant conformities of basic aesthetic discriminations are *not* manifested to empirical research, the negative force of this lack must be strong; it would be difficult convincingly to maintain the existence of a 'near-universal human responsive framework' on theoretical grounds alone in face of contradictory empirical evidence. It is at this point that studies such as those assembled in the book under review have a special and well-nigh unique relevance; for primitive societies are now the only truly exotic societies left for observation, that is the only societies which retain indigenous aesthetic traditions on which important inter-cultural influences may in some cases be discounted.

Two related problems which exercised many of the contributors bear closely on the question with which we are concerned. The first is the difficulty which many of them experienced to a varying extent in identifying, let alone appraising, what artefacts did and what did not rank as works of art within the terms of the society under investigation. It was generally felt that Western ideas of art must to some extent be abandoned in order to appreciate the art of other cultures developed in accordance with alien traditions. The second problem arose in connection with the existence of apparently 'art-less' societies or at any rate societies with no more than a minimal development or interest in the visual arts. The connection between the two problems is indicated by Anthony Forge in his Introduction: 'Another question that constantly recurred in our discussions was whether there could be any way of delimiting art from other productive activities. It was obvious that any sort of gallery based conception from our own culture was inadequate and that there are, in fact, no "artless" societies.'

It is certain that many anthropologists feel an uneasiness in applying Western standards to the appreciation of primitive art. In the Introduction to his article on 'Kilenge Big Man Art' Philip Dark expresses this uneasiness in a series of questions: 'If in one form or another it [art] occurs in all cultures, what are its principles? Are they universal? Is it, in fact, possible to obtain data from different cultures which will allow us to posit principles applicable to all cultures? Our conceptual world of art may have no counterpart in another culture. If we seek in it the world of art as we circumscribe it we may discover it in our terms and within our precepts. But to a member of another society the phenomena we have already selected to study may not be classifiable in terms of our selection.' But if we do not apply the concepts of Western tradition, how then *are* we to identify and appraise the arts of alien societies? It is not possible to adopt an objective attitude and assess as 'art' those artefacts towards

which the members of a primitive society manifest the sort of attitudes and behaviour which we manifest towards the objects which we in Western societies regard as 'art'. This is impossible because primitive societies have no concept of fine art; they do not have picture galleries or museums or private collections. Nor, for similar reasons, is it possible to identify and appraise the art objects of a primitive society by the aesthetic standards prevalent within that society instead of by our own. The impulse to perfection which lies at the heart of craftsmanship is now recognized to go back very far in the evolution of the human race. In their survey *Prehistoric Societies* Grahame Clark and Stuart Piggott, writing of Lower Palaeolithic man, say: 'The cult of excellence, the determination to make things as perfect as they could be made, even if at a purely utilitarian level perfection might seem excessive, is something which began thus early in the history of man.'[9] The instinct for decoration—as seen, for example, in the adornment of the human body and the decoration of utensils, particularly ceramics—has been very general, if not universal. But the aesthetic impulses as we understand them, in terms of non-functional intelligibility and enjoyment, are more difficult to isolate and trace. In primitive societies the range of artefacts which we are most inclined to classify as 'art' always have a primarily religious or ritualistic or magical function or they serve as status symbols or fulfil some other social function or are made as utensils for a plain utilitarian purpose. While (sometimes) admiring a well-made thing or a correctly decorated artefact, the members of such societies would not understand a request to distinguish an 'aesthetic' interest from interest in the function which these objects serve and for which they are traditionally made.[10] What then could it *mean* to identify or appraise such objects as 'art' in terms of the categories prevalent in these societies? Without our concept of 'art', these societies do not have an alternative set of categories and standards by which to discriminate what artefacts are to judged as 'art' for them. If artefacts don't rank as 'art' by the standards which we employ in Western tradition, and if they do not attract within their own societies the sort of attitudes which we associate with art in our own culture—and here Miss Meager's 'non-utilitarian intelligibility' is central—one must perforce ask what point there can be in suggesting that they may nevertheless be 'art'.[11] In fact, underlying all such talk of sitting loose to traditional Western concepts of art and appraising primitive art by more universal or more local—at any rate more relevant—standards there lurks an unacknowledged *assumption* that there exist universal, inter-cultural aesthetic apprehensions and responses independent of social conditioning. These universal aesthetic apprehensions and responses, it might be argued, are moulded and

shaped into specific and partially conflicting standards within the different aesthetic traditions of various societies and cultures; therefore by applying the standards of one culture to the art objects of another we risk both appraising them by a false measuring rod and failing to see part of aesthetic value which is there to be seen by one who is less rigidly conditioned, more open-minded. In order to avoid such irrelevance and distortion we must abandon our inherited artistic conceptions for a more universal and general aesthetic vision. I do not believe that this argument is deliberately advocated by all those who feel uneasy at appraising the art of alien societies by Western standards; but I am confident that it is the only sort of argument which makes sense of the project which they set themselves. But just because the assumption of universal aesthetic apprehensions and responses is inherent to the project itself, the empirical results achieved cannot verify the validity of the assumption. Only in so far as the method proves itself to be viable and perhaps illuminating can the results to which it leads lend some measure of reasonableness to the assumption of universality latent in it.

Anthropologists have also been exercised by the existence of apparently 'art-less' societies. There are societies, for example the Tikopia and the pygmies of the Congo forest, with traditions of poetry, music and the associated arts of theatre and dancing but with virtually no tradition of plastic art. Of the Tikopia for example, Raymond Firth says: 'In the sphere of plastic and graphic expression Tikopia offers a case of almost minimal art.'[11] Yet with many anthropologists it seems to have been an article of faith that there can be no societies without at least a rudimentary tradition of visual art.[12] Denise Paulme, for instance, begins her paper on 'Adornment and Nudity in Tropical Africa' with the statement: 'It would, nowadays, be difficult to maintain successfully the proposition that a society, however impoverished economically, can be quite devoid of artistic tradition'. To support this thesis, however, she must stretch the concept of visual art to a point where it becomes nugatory. Of the Yembe of the Congo, 'who work neither wood, stone, nor ivory,' she says that they 'erect immense *emumu* which derive from the tower and the palanquin, exhibit them for a moment, then burn them in a ballet-like finale.' Among the Bété of the West Ivory Coast a man who has killed an enemy won the right to wear a necklace of *sabo* bark and the one who wore the greatest number of such necklaces was honoured as a national hero. 'Can one allege', she asks, 'that the Bété are wholly lacking in artistic tradition when the entire village saw in its conquering hero the incarnation of an ideal in which physical and moral virtues seem indissolubly linked?' Some form of bodily ornamentation is very

general—tattooing, scarification, body painting, etc. These ornamentations, as also distinctive forms of headdress, etc., serve a practical function: they indicate ethnic origin, locality, social status, and so on. Whether they also carry an aesthetic significance remains in most cases a quite open question and one which it is probably impossible to answer: the question itself would be meaningless to the peoples under investigation, who decorate according to set patterns in full awareness of the practical significance of the decoration and because such is the tradition of the society in which they live, but who have no concept of 'non-utilitarian or non-functional intelligibility'. Anthony Forge suggests (p. xviii) that 'body decorations, face-painting, head-dresses, and all sorts of ephemeral constructions, may well form an essential part of the cultural visual system that includes works of art in our more narrowly defined terms'. This hardly gets to the root of the question. Traffic signals, newsprint and advertisement posters are an essential part of the visual system of European and American culture, but they are considered to lie outside the concept of art. The belief that there are not and could not be completely 'art-less' societies appears to be tied up with the same assumption, perhaps not always deliberately held, that aesthetic activity and appreciation are a 'universal' characteristic of human nature. But in this case the conclusion is erroneous and confused. It is one thing to hold that aesthetic response is 'universal' in the sense that wherever it occurs it must display certain basic features in common. It is a different thing to maintain that it is 'universal' in the sense that it must occur wherever there are human beings. We know that there are human beings without sensibility or the capacity for appreciation in this or the other art form (poets or painters may be unable to apprehend music or musicians may be blind to the aesthetic aspects of painting, and so on) and that there are people without capacity for appreciation in any art form. There is no reason why there should not be societies which have failed to develop a tradition in this or that art form or indeed in any art form at all. Indeed we find that there are such societies. And nothing but confusion is gained by stretching the concept of 'art' to the point of meaninglessness in order to bring them within the fold.

Artistic universality has been probed under two aspects, the universality of symbolism (iconographical features) and the universality of those aspects of art objects ('aesthetic' features) which are often referred to as 'formal' or expressive—those aspects in virtue of which two artefacts may be iconographically indistinguishable yet one be judged a splendid work of art and the other banal. On the former aspect the evidence is unambiguous. In the words of Anthony Forge: 'That there is no necessary

cross-cultural connection in ranges of meaning of even the simplest graphic element is also apparent'. There are no Jungian archetypes in the field of visual art. It is with the second, or aesthetic, aspect that we are chiefly concerned, and here opinion is more divided. Most anthropologists are tentative and cautious. Some of them, like some aestheticians, are dogmatic on the side of relativism or on the side of universalism. Edmund Leach, for example, in the introduction to his study of 'Levels of Communication and Problems of Taboo in the Appreciation of Primitive Art', inclines strongly to the relativist view: 'Art is effective or communicative or whatever else it is *only* in terms of the cultural context in which it is observed'. William Fagg in a paper 'In Search of Meaning in African Art' is no less definite and dogmatic on the other side: 'All those who are able and willing to use an informed judgement on the problem *know* that universal values exist'. The whole question is fairly summed up by Anthony Forge as follows: 'There seemed general agreement with Goldwater's view that the aesthetic is concerned with power, with the heightened impact of a perfect object whether it be beautiful, ugly, or frightening. But whether there is a universal human aesthetic remained a matter of faith, those who believed in a basic, presumably genetic, set of responses to certain forms, proportions, and so on were as unable to prove their case as those who did not were able to disprove it'.

CONCLUSION. On the one hand there are philosophers who believe that works of art 'emerge' within the context of this or that society, that they can be identified and appraised only within the 'mode of life' inherent to the traditions of the society; on the other hand there are those who believe that, while works of art indubitably 'express' the mode of life of the society to which they belong, there is nevertheless a profounder level of apprehension at which they can be appreciated and appraised universally. Both these views have been connected with the popular concept of a 'mode of life' and as often happens with ephemeral philosophical fashions, both have sometimes been carried to implausible extremes without sufficient attention to all the implications involved.

What, then, does it *mean*, we must ask in the first place, to say that works of art (as distinct from the material artefacts in which they are embodied) can only be identified, apprehended and appraised within the terms of the society to which they belong? If it is intended merely to say that we recognize works of art as such, appreciate them and appraise them, in virtue of the dispositions and standards which we have as members of the society of which we are members, it is both a truism and a triviality. We are all members of a society and in none of our activities or judge-

ments can we escape from our own skins. In this trivial sense the 'institutional' type of theory is self-evidently true. As members of a given society we apprehend and appraise aesthetically in terms of standards bred in us as members of the society of which we are members and we respond in the manner in which we are socially conditioned to respond. With, of course, ample individual differences. But if an institutional theory of art is intended to mean that in our aesthetic appreciations we are enclosed within the shut boxes of the societies to which we belong, then the theory is patently contrary to fact. We appreciate works of art from prehistoric societies and societies whose traditions and modes of life are a closed book to us; we appreciate the arts of societies whose traditions are exotic to our own. And despite some limitations and distortions due to imperfect familiarity and skill (limitations and distortions which also occur when an individual is exposed to unfamiliar works within his own artistic tradition), where comparison is possible we find that by and large our own appreciations accord reasonably well with those current in the exotic societies in question. Nor is Western art a closed book to members of societies with traditions alien to our own. But we appreciate—inevitably—with the conditioning and the standards that are ours. And this is apparent also within our own artistic tradition. The ancient Greeks lacked our concept of art: they did not distinguish between fine art in our sense and skilled handicraft (*techne*). Yet their art has been pretty consistently appreciated and the fact that they have been recognized to stand fairly near the beginning of the Western artistic tradition has tended to obscure for some people how radically the appreciations of Greek art have changed at different epochs in European history from the Carolingian renaissance until today. So too appreciation of the Gothic and of other artistic manifestations within the Western tradition have undergone hardly less radical peripeties with the fluctuations of taste. These considerations are cogent too for the less extreme forms of 'institutional' theory which maintain that works of art, as also our appreciations of them, 'express' or reflect a 'mode of life' within a social tradition. And those for whom such expression or reflection of a socialized mode of life is important must still remember that the tawdry, banal and derivative art in any style does this also and perhaps to a greater degree than the much rarer works of fine and splendid art. It is the great masterpieces of splendid and creative art which, in any society, exert an impact that is inexplicable in terms of subject or symbolism; and it is these rather than the more pedestrian and humdrum levels which attract universal appreciation.

Philosophers who think that there are universal aesthetic values inherent

in common dispositions of human nature can point to facts of intercultural appreciation to support their view. Cross-cultural appreciations between traditions as widely diverse as say the Chinese and the European are not entirely arbitrary or unintelligible to each other and the congruence cannot be wholly accidental. Our apprehension of 'expressive' qualities in exotic art—ancient Egyptian or Mesopotamian, Pre-Columbian, Tibetan, etc.—is far more uncertain and unclear. It is the so-called 'formal' characteristics which, in the absence of functional or symbolical understanding, make a sure impact from culture to culture. This, it may be argued, can only be in virtue of some deep-lying 'human' response to formal qualities not wholly accountable in terms of cultural conditioning. It might be argued too that such basic initial response, or the predisposition for it, must be postulated in order to make its cultural conditioning plausible. But the sort of universality which is meant to be, or which can be, claimed is more difficult to determine.

Certainly there is nothing to be said for the claim sometimes made that aesthetic reaction or activity is inherent to human nature as such and therefore 'must be' manifested in some degree wherever there are human beings and societies. There are societies, groups and individuals with no discernible aesthetic interest or activity. The reverse could be maintained only by making the concept of aesthetic so wide as to be virtually meaningless. Indeed it could be argued from the prevalence of derivative 'official' art and architecture—both the monumental and commemorative art which littered our cities until a generation ago and the forlorn abstract or semi-abstract sculpture which now disfigures our buildings—that many individuals, perhaps the majority, in contemporary Western societies are now lacking the ability or the interest to appreciate aesthetic quality in the visual arts and to discriminate the artistic from the bogus. It seems that while tradition fosters the making and marketing of certain types of artefact, the power of aesthetic discrimination may be gradually atrophying under pressure of more urgent practical concerns. What must be claimed therefore by the universalists is that *where aesthetic interest and activity appear* they display uniformities which are not explicable by acculturation or by the aesthetic interchanges between society and society. But it is not readily apparent whether such uniformity in fact exists or what sort of thing it would be if it does exist. As has been said, study of the art of primitive societies, if conducted without preconceptions, could be peculiarly valuable at this point. The root problem, to which I do not know the answer, must be to determine whether it is possible to define aesthetic activity in such a way as will distinguish it from other kinds of socially fostered activity (religious, magical, semantic, etc.) and

would still allow the possibility that there should *not* be uniformities among the aesthetic activities of different societies. For if uniformity results from our conception of what 'aesthetic' is, the assertion that aesthetic values are universal becomes mere verbal tautology. Yet it is difficult to conceive that we would sensibly call activities of different societies 'aesthetic' unless there were some considerable measure of uniformity among them in basic discriminations and appreciations.

What I have been trying to say might also be expressed in terms of 'meaning theory'. Thomas E. Hill, for example, says: 'A meaning of a work of art for a given culture in a given period may be taken to be a meaning that sensitive persons in that culture and in that period, would, in specifiable circumstances, be disposed to intend to lead respondents to apprehend if they were to produce or refer to that work of art to lead respondents to apprehend any meaning'. (43)[13] The same writer defines 'natural' meaning as a way of meaning 'in which the meaning of a bearer depends in the end on dispositions natural to man and likely to be operative in any human being'. (34) He adds that these dispositions are 'dispositions common to all or most human beings to use certain types and certain enduring things to express certain meanings. Included in these dispositions are expectations that respondents will take the bearers used to have the meanings usually intended'. (35) Of works of art he says: 'Prominent among the non-intentional meanings of works of art are natural meanings, for no work of art is likely deeply to affect human beings without relying directly or indirectly upon links between materials and meanings that are in some degree natural to human beings'. (303) He assumes that cultural meanings of works of art are 'grounded in such natural links', and contrasting the manner in which the cultural meaning of a work of art emerges from the 'component ingredients' with the 'manner in which the cultural meaning of a sentence arises from its part', he says: 'However, while the work of art involves principles of technique as ingredient factors having meanings of their own, the experience patterns constituting the meaning of the work are more presented than constructed and they are non-discursive rather than discursive. Each element contributes in its own way to the meaning of the whole, but the elements are put together, not so much by rules, as by creative insight into the nature of the materials and their potentialities for the meaning of the whole. Moreover the materials themselves are richer in natural meaning potential than are the elements from which sentences are built. They are, accordingly, less likely to be fully subordinated to completely foreseen sets of experience patterns, and each makes its own unique, and never completely predictable, contribution to the



shaping of the experience patterns constituting meanings of works of art.' (3;4)

This is not out of accord with the general run of opinion among writers on art theory today. But what, one must ask, are these 'elements' which are the ingredients of non-literary art and what is the evidence that they have 'natural' meaning in the sense defined? The elements of works of visual art are, presumably, colours, shapes, lines and combinations of these to form volumes and masses real or simulated. The second question is that with which this paper has been concerned. So far at any rate the evidence that these elements have natural or intercultural meaning in the sense defined, either in themselves or at any level of combination in works of art, seems not to be substantial. Quite certainly evidence for this should be investigated more rigorously and with a clearer understanding both of the point at issue and of what would constitute evidence for or against natural meaning.

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[2] *E.g.* T. J. Diffey, 'The Republic of Art', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 9, No. 2.

[3] See Jean Laude, *La Peinture française* (1905–1914) *et "l'Art nègre"*, Editions Klincksieck, 1968.

[4] In his book *African Art. The Years since 1920* (1973) Professor Marshall Ward Mount writes of a new African art which has emerged since the 1920s and which combines elements from traditional African and modern European art.

[5] Frederick E. Taylor, 'Music and its Logic', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 14, No. 3.

[6] R. Meager, 'Art and Beauty', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 14, No. 2.

[7] Hume, 'Of the Standard of Taste', in *Essays Moral, Political and Literary*.

[8] The American biologist, Professor Joshua Lederberg, writing in connection with the breeding of man–animal hybrids, has offered the following definition of what it means to be human: 'Rather than superficial appearance of face and chromosomes, a more rational criterion of human identity might be the potential for communication within the species, which is the foundation upon which the unique glory of man is built' ('Experimental Genetics and Human Evolution' in *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, October 1966). If we think of artistic activity in this context, it becomes clear that aesthetic communication has features which distinguish it from other modes of communication in fundamental ways. (1) Like certain spontaneous bodily gestures but unlike 'conventional' communication systems, the 'message' conveyed in any aesthetic 'communication' cannot be isolated so as to be 'translated' into an alternative communications system. (2) The ability to receive aesthetic communications is very patchily distributed and unevenly developed among members of sophisticated societies and probably all others.

(3) The ability to initiate aesthetic communications of any complexity is restricted to a very small proportion indeed of the members of a society. It cannot be learnt or taught. Everyone can write a letter in prose or in verse; few can write a poem. In view of these differences it should always be remembered that popular talk about art as 'language' is metaphorical and although it has marginal truth, it has a strong tendency to mislead if the limitations of the metaphor are not kept in mind.

[9] Grahame Clark and Stuart Piggott, *Prehistoric Societies* (1965), p. 40.

[10] As Robert Goldwater has said in his paper 'Art History and Anthropology': 'What is in effect recognised is that beauty and naturalism are not generalized concepts which can be either overlaid or omitted at will from previously imagined functional objects, changing their "aesthetic" aspect but not their function. The presence or absence of these qualities, in part determined by role, but also affecting that role by the impact they have, is an essential and primary aspect of these objects—as basic as their material substance or their iconographical character. . . . This suggests that the search for a primitive aesthetics, which implies qualities of pure arrangement and design and the satisfaction of self-contained order, will at the very best be inconclusive in its results'. In writing like this Goldwater assumes that there are *universal* aesthctie qualities manifested in primitive art objects, that these are recognizable by Western observers and that they make a similar impact on the Western anthropologis and the members of the primitive society.

[11] The term 'minimal' carries vastly different connotations when it is applied to primitive societies from those which it bears when it is used to name a movement in contemporary art. When it is used of a primitive society the implication is that in that society no more than a rudimentary art tradition has developed. But the minimal artist of today is one who has absorbed the highly sophisticated art traditions of Western society and has then deliberately repudiated them in favour of an artificial simplicity.

[12] In a paper 'Without Art' Alicja Iwánska reversed conclusions reached as a result of 'intensive investigations' in Good Fortune, a community of American farmers from the state of Washington and 'El Nopal', a community of Mazahua Indians from Central Mexico. She had concluded that there was 'no art whatsoever' in these communities. Later, starting from the *assumption* that 'there exist in all human societies four basic orientations towards the environment: cognitive orientation, moral orientation, activistic orientation and aesthetic orientation', she found evidences of aesthetic interest in both. Among the Mazahua Indians she found it in the uncluttered and undecorated orderliness of their homes and in the farming society in a farmer who indulged in non-utilitarian welding for the pleasure of watching the sparks fly.

[13] Thomas E. Hill, *The Concept of Meaning* (1974). References are to pages of this book.

THE INTENTIONAL FALLACY REVISITED

Berel Lang

EVEN IN a world where few events are more favoured than hearing the name (and lie) given to a new fallacy the description by Wimsatt and Beardsley of the Intentional Fallacy[1] has had an unusual success. Certain qualifications have accrued to their thesis, which asserts in its strong form that knowledge of a creator's circumstances or 'intentions' is irrelevant to either the understanding or the appreciation of his creations. But even these qualifications have not moved far from the centre of the claim that whatever information one acquires about a work of art from sources external to it, comprehension of the work—and thus confirmation that the data collected elsewhere are at all relevant—must come finally from the object itself.[2] And surely this is correct, even obvious, to the extent that one wonders that anyone could have been guilty of committing the Fallacy either before or certainly after it was named. It is as if this were a fallacy which *could* not be committed even by those who deliberately set out to do so, so long only as they were in fact concerned with the work of art. We find our way into the *Iliad* without knowing more about Homer's 'intentions' than what a few oblique legends tell us; we know a good deal about Marcel Proust's life, and there is no mistaking its own interest as a work of art—but finally this *recherche* leads away from the cork-lined bedroom at 44 rue Hamelin and back to the room described in Proust's novel named in its title as another *Recherche*. To speak of what the writer or artist had in mind when he was in labour seems only to nourish a ready victim for Occam's razor; why, after all, multiply entities in a world which already suffers from over-population?

And yet, of course, the talk goes on. One can hardly read an essay of even serious and penetrating criticism without being struck by the provenance of aesthetic intentions: the nautical intentions of the artist who had 'set out on a new tack' or was continuing on the 'course he had set' earlier; ethical intentions of 'high (or low) moral purpose'; technological

intentions demanding skill in solving problems of dialogue or palette, of finding an apt (or inept) vehicle for an intended effect; biographical and psychological data which were bound to determine the intent of the artist's work; reports of the artist's own words on what he had wanted to accomplish—the work itself, as consequence, being then 'fully-' or 'partly-' or 'un-realized.' On the strength of critical discourse alone one could hardly avoid the impression that not only might something be accomplished in art, but that something (not necessarily the same thing) had before that been essayed or intended; that it is in the capacity and the interest of a viewer to gain access to the latter as well as to the former of these domains, and that the initial—and in a sense the most authentic—source for knowledge of both domains is in the creator or artist himself.

Nor is this idiom confined to the application of practical criticism. The theory of criticism as well, which cannot plead the pressure of need for a rough language by which to assess individual works in a great variety of media and shapes, cannot or will not forgo the usage. The readers and critics who took up E. D. Hirsch's version of *Validity in Interpretation*, in which the author commits himself to a full-scale intentionalism, had not, one assumes, forgotten the Intentional Fallacy; they were, quite simply, defying it.

1. A question presents itself, then, which the essay by Wimsatt and Beardsley and the literature around it have not faced: *Why* all the talk about artists' intentions? For even if writers who employ that concept speak often from a conceptual muddle (and I agree that they do), their loyalty to it gives it at least the force of a symptom; like the heart, it seems, mistakes will have their reasons. And it is not enough to moralize by way of explanation that bad habits die hard, and those in the hands of critics harder than most (true as it may be). For this only begs the question of why the habit should have taken shape in the first place.

The question, it seems, will have two parts. We shall want to know why critics as they talk about art talk about intentions at all; and we shall also be asking why, once they're talking about intentions, they so consistently place the intentions identified in the process of art on the shoulders (that is, in the head) of the artist rather than some other place. We shall probably not meet those two parts in isolation from each other; furthermore, in following their conjunction we will tread a thin line between conceptual and psychological analysis. Finally, moreover, like any reconstruction this one can hope only to achieve plausibility, not certainty, about a largely inaccessible past. But hazarding such difficulties we may yet find out something about art in the present.

Let us first in following the lines of reconstruction imagine a world of

perfection in which every element is fully itself, breeding no change either for the better (since there would be none) or for worse (since, by hypothesis, it would not do this). If we can once overcome the difficulty of conceiving the possibility of such a world, there will be little difficulty in conceiving the systematic absence from it of the concept of intention: we would hardly strike upon the idea that something is or had been intended to be other than what it is or was when everything is and has been exactly fine. The discovery even of the concept of possibility in such a setting would represent a flash of genius; by the same measure invocation of the concept of intention, that things were or are intended to be either what they are or other than that, would be a stroke of perversity.

For obvious reasons it is difficult to insist on this account. But the boundary which it marks reveals another and (literally) mundane side of the coin. The actual world—as it happens—is obtrusively at odds with such a state of perfection. The sense of possibility is ingredient in it as the recognition of actuality is continually affronted: things might be, often they should be, different from what they are. Furthermore, where an agent is implicated—someone who sponsors the arrangements as they unfold—this recognition is stronger still. There were, after all, different possibilities; when in the end only one emerges it is probable that it emerges from the welter of other might-have-been's because it was intended to.

In more modest terms intentions seem to presuppose a realization os the possibility of alternatives. It is evidence of this, strong if not conclusive, that the talk of intentions and of the cluster of related concepts such as evaluation or responsibility, is most notable in the actuality of ethics. There the measurement of what-is against what-might-have-been or what-should-have-been recurs; without such parameters the actuality would hardly be ethical at all. No 'ought', Kant reminds us, binds the Holy Will; it is, then, the inadequacy of what lesser wills promise (and live up to or, more usually, down to) that gives force to the concept of 'ought' and whatever is entailed by it. And so with the concept of intention: if one already (and always) *had* what one wanted, or if one were obliged to have what one had, there would be little point to speaking of one's having 'intended' to have it. The beginning, then, if with a sense of disparity between actuality on the one hand and what could have been on the other—the latter drawn from a reservoir of possiblities of which we otherwise have knowledge.

If against this background of generalities we put the question of why art criticism invokes the language of intentionality, one answer seems straightforward. Most works of art—with egregious exceptions

at the two ends of the spectrum—embody measures of both failure and success. They accomplish *something* in the experience of the viewer; and yet they are also limited or misfire in other respects. Precisely how the recognition of these two aspects of the work takes place is a question apart: certainly the viewer adjusts his expectations in light of a cumulative experience of the capabilities of art as well as of directives posited by the single work. More needs to be said about this evolution of critical judgement; but for the moment what is at issue is not how particular intentions are identified in particular moments, but why the genre of intentions should in this context be appealed to at all. And when the claim already cited about the fact of art's accomplishment is juxtaposed with a second feature, it seems that the primary conditions defining the ambience of intentions have been fulfilled. This second factor is the appearance of art as neither fortuitous nor gratuitous; that is, the suggestion by the work of art itself that it did not just *happen* to assume the form it possesses and that this form (or even the form lacking, but of which it itself provides intimations) points to a specific end in experience. We start, to put the matter summarily, from a sense that the structure and effect of the work of art, coherent and expressive as they often appear, are more intellegible aesthetically if considered as the outcome of intentions than not.

To be sure there has been disagreement whether the work of art is usefully described in such terms. Hampshire, for example, in considering the issue of aesthetic evaluation, has argued for a sharp distinction between it and moral evaluation precisely on the grounds that the former must be guided by the fact that no problem has been set to which the art object answers; in effect, it has no goal.[3] And certainly this is the case in so far as one thinks of 'problems' on the lines which mark out alternatives pressing for moral decision or action. But think again, at the basic level of aesthetic analysis, of the moving elements of the work of art: there is on one hand a medium, a stuff; there is, on the other, within that medium the germ of certain possibilities of coherence. To be sure no prior rules govern the arrangement of those possibilities (except for a class which is so empty of specification as to be irrelevant). And yet a pre-eminent feature of the shapes which art finally assumes is the consistency or coherence with which those possibilities are worked out—what we acknowledge, for one important example, in the nomenclature of artistic style. The shaping of those possibilities, the selection by which they are made to hang together (or in the event separately), are notable considerations for the viewer, and not, it seems, merely in retrospect even if it is only then that he becomes aware of the 'problem' to which they provide a resolution. It cannot be an accident that aesthetic analysis

has so constantly attended to the theme of unity, however vague or varied the criteria by which the latter has been identified. But the art work, either in the mind of the creator or, more importantly for the question raised here, in the experience of the viewer, does not start out possessing unity; that only *may* be achieved in the constitution of the work. Even internally, then—I leave aside for the moment the external ends on which this internal unity verges—the work of art has something about it of the reaching toward an end—and also of achieving it or falling short or (more usually) of some combination of these, with all the shadings of contrast which mark such accomplishments. But surely these discriminations are no less than the elements of a language of intentions—that language which, however abused, is a recurrent element of critical usage. It is worth noting again that whatever else may recommend accounts such as Hampshire's as well as the one laid out in the formulation of the Intentional Fallacy, *all* that they have to say about this linguistic commonplace is that it is in error.

It is undeniable that the conditions cited for the deployment of this usage of language are served by ill defined boundaries. How does one decide, for example, whether a particular set of features in a work of art *does* move towards—or reach or fail to reach—a recognizable end, let alone agree on what the end is? There may be no ready answer to such questions, but it is important to recognize that the same questions are often, even characteristically, raised about intentions quite aside from their appearance in the process of art. It is hardly less difficult in the ascription of intentions to know whether at a particular moment intentions are to be ascribed at all than to ascertain what the intentions of the moment are; and so far as this may be a difficulty it may be a difficulty, it seems, wherever we hope to sepak of intentions.

2. The issue has been avoided thus far as to *where* the intentions linked to the work of art are to be located. Will they, despite the perils, still be the artist's intentions? If not, where do they take root? Look for a moment at a standard model by means of which intentions are attributed. There is in this model on the one side, an intender; on the other, his intentions. He, the intender, is independent of any particular intention: he persists after they have been left (realized or unrealized), just as he presumably preceded them. An intention, this usage suggests, is something that one *has*, approximately in the sense that one has a watch on one's wrist or credit at the bank. Of course the intender must meet certain requirements. To be capable of 'having' intentions he must be conscious of alternative courses of action and be capable of choosing among them: in short, he must have a mind. And the converse of this soon follows—

logically, perhaps, or anyhow: no mind, no intentions. If we speak, on this model, of the cat's 'intention' to pounce when the mouse comes out of his hole, we use the term equivocally; with children it is precisely a point at which legal systems become vague and uncertain as to when they really begin to 'intend' their actions.

If only from the currency of its usage, there can be little question that this model is serviceable; in general it works. The common patterns of blame and praise follow it; the usual, even the technical, meanings ascribed to responsibility return to it. It would, furthermore, account for the origins and eventually for the commission of the Intentional Fallacy. For intentions, this model informs us, belong always to *somebody* —a person whose capacities are specifically indicated. The principal 'somebody' within striking distance of the work of art is the artist himself; if *anyone* 'had' the intentions, set the process in motion, shaped its programme, surely it is he. And so to the conclusion.

This is, in rough detail, a reconstruction of how the Intentional Fallacy might come to be committed. On the model cited of intenders and intentions the process it describes is quite consistent in its attempt to render an account of the art object. But as we have already seen, one of its parts immediately encounters the forceful criticism of the Intentional Fallacy: we may not know much—or anything—about the artist's intentions; even if we do, that knowledge is without significance aside from the object of art itself, and the latter, finally, may be significant even if we don't.

Something, it seems, is wrong, and not merely as a matter of procedure. We might, as Hampshire's essay suggests, hope to dispense with the language of aesthetic intention altogether; then the question of the manner in which the Fallacy is a fallacy becomes academic. But the *prima facie* evidence is strong on the other side. The language of intentions is in fact used. Furthermore, I have argued, the process of viewing the object of art does assume a form which touches the form of intentions; that language, in other words, is apparently useful as well as used. In effect, then, the problem which the statement of the Intentional Fallacy leaves over is whether whatever has inspired the use of the language of intention with respect to art can be acknowledged without the misleading encumbrances to which that usage has evidently led. I suggest that there is a means of doing this, and that this means may be more largely informative about the process of art itself. I attempt only to outline this prospect.

The recent discussions of intentions which are indebted to Wittgenstein have been designed specifically to identify an alternate possibility to the

standard model of intentions described above;[4] they have been productive above all in identifying that model as indeed being a model, with the implied possibility of other models as well. Consider then one such alternative which is close to the spirit of the recommendations suggested in this recent discussion.

Instead of beginning with the presupposition of an intender who 'has' intentions let us attempt to start, if not to stop, with the intentions themselves; rather than assuming an anterior distinction between actions and agent—the two thus viewed as independent of each other—we would then be regarding the actions as defining the agent. On such an account the agent in a sense *is* his actions. This attempt at reconciliation between agent and action, the intent of which is to exorcise any possible 'ghost in the machine', has been the pre-eminent feature of recent analyses of action, and it carries over neatly and plausibly into analysis of the concept of intentions. Thus if, on the basis of art's appearance, the language of intentions seems pertinent to the talk about it, we should be able to utilize that language in this alternative model as well as in the earlier one. The disclosure of the Intentional Fallacy in fact adds force to this effort: if the appeal to the artist is either redundant or irrelevant to a grasp of the work, then we should be able to make whatever sense we make of it from the action of the work itself; and if, furthermore, the language of intentions is pertinent, we should then be able to exhibit that pertinence without appealing to the artist as a source.

This all becomes possible if we return the language of intentions to the context of the work itself—if, in other words, we speak of the work's intentions rather than those of the artist, of *its* realization (or falling short) of what it had intended rather than his. Such a move would observe the new proprieties: we're speaking about the machine itself, not a ghost, but about a machine now bent in recognizable patterns. Admittedly, it sounds odd to speak of intentions but not of a 'live' intender. But this reaction is evidence on the one hand of how committed we are to the traditional model of intentions; on the other hand it has its own flexibilities. For although the work of art is not live in the same sense as the artist is, talk about the 'vitality' of art is surely something more than merely a metaphor—sufficiently so, at any rate, that use of the language of intentions with respect to art will at least not be arbitrary. If we move at a general level to portray animate beings in terms of intentions (or analogous actions) and not the other way round, then we solve the question whether the work of art is capable of having intentions by seeing in fact—or as close to fact as the identification of intentions ever comes—whether the work of art has them. Not by *a priori* genealogical trees.

It will be soon recognized that the point on which these suggestions converge has a history. The conception in Kant's *Critique of Aesthetic Judgement* of 'purposiveness without purpose,' that feature of the object of beauty which seems to intend without being intended aside from the object (the seeming being crucial to the quality of the relation), is an obvious antecedent; it is back towards that rich source, in its connection with teleological judgement, that the analysis of aesthetic intentions must look, I think, if it is to progress beyond the stalemate left by the assertion of the Intentional Fallacy on the one hand and the persistent appeal by critics to the language of intentions on the other.

It may quickly seem that for these proposals no less than for the rejected appeal to the artist's intentions Occam's razor should once again be summoned. For one thing the account is obliged to argue that in successful works of art intentions and their realization coincide: what we would then have in the end is a symmetry, the art work itself. And here one must justify talk about the cumbersome pair of intention and realization when one could more simply speak only about what the work amounts to or, still more neutrally, is. The answer to this objection, it seems to me, has two sides, both hinted at previously: one accidental and a matter of mere technology; the other essential and related to the process of art itself. The former issues from the fact that moments of perfect symmetry in art are rare: we do not often encounter works with *no* loose ends (or beginnings or middles). For this majority of instances we need a language which communicates the viewer's sense of related accomplishment and inadequacy in the work; and the language of intentions, I have suggested, does this. On these terms the representations of perfect symmetry mark out boundaries which become pertinent critically in the light of the representatives of less complete success.

The second, more essential justification concerns even those works of art for which there is no gap between intention and actuality. Even if we agree that success in such cases is reflected in the observer's view of the work as unified or coherent, this is not the way in which the *process* of grasping the work is carried on. Art works may turn out to be the cohesive circles envisaged by so many theorists of art, in which every element is linked to every other, no one of them to be altered without affecting every other—but they do not start this way. Furthermore, it is at least a possibility—I would argue that it is more than this—that in art, as distinct from technology or science, the process by which the end is reached persists and is integral to the end itself, in the grasp of the viewer as well as in the object. I suggest, in other words, that such emphasis as we find in Aristotle's apparently simple definition of the beginning, middle

and end of a tragedy is more than only a schematic way of breaking down the structure of the art work in retrospect. The assimilation of the possibilities progressively opened and related in the object of art seem in fact to be as important to its appreciation as the consummation which they eventually reach. If we look at the viewing of art not as a gratuitous act, contemplative both fore and aft, but as an accomplishment, a form of *praxis* in the life of a viewer committed to such activity for the activity itself and not only for its abstracted ends, the language of intentions would be pertinent for understanding it even after all the intentions of a particular object had been made explicit and even if, in the event, they had all been realized.

The idiom of common usage, of course, does not evolve by prescription; and I have not been arguing, at any rate, that the language of criticism *ought* to employ the category of aesthetic intentions. It is a fact, though, that notwithstanding the force of the Intentional Fallacy, the talk of intentions goes on; and what I have been proposing, then, defers to the statement of the Fallacy but also acknowledges the latter violations. We should still want to know, beyond the limits of this discussion and in facing the largest question of what the source of art's attraction is, the role of intentions in that attraction—how intentions, which now belong to the object of art, figure in the power of that object. But this is a separate question, and one which might be taken seriously only after we admit the evidence of critical usage that *something* of what goes on in the process of art links that process to the language of intentions.

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[3] S. Hampshire, 'Logic and Appreciation,' *The World Review* (1952), reprinted in W. E. Kennick, ed., *Art and Philosophy* (1964), pp. 579–85.

[4] E.g., G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intentions* (1957), pp. 53–6.

INTENTION AND INTERPRETATION IN LITERATURE

A. J. Ellis

THE QUESTION I wish to discuss is this: How far is an author's own understanding of his work, his intention as to how it should be read, relevant to our interpretation of that work? Before I start, let me make two remarks. First, this question is sometimes discussed as part of a more general question, such as: How far are biographical facts about an author relevant to an interpretation of his work? Now there are very many different sorts of biographical fact and I see no reason to think that they should all be discussed in the same way. In particular, biographical facts about the author's intentions in respect of his work are a very special set of facts and they may or may not have a relevance to this particular question irrespective of what we may wish to say about other sorts of biographical fact. If this claim is not initially obvious, it is borne out, I think, by the rest of the paper, which has relevance only to the particular question that I have raised. Second, I shall be discussing poetry throughout. I am pretty certain that what I say could be generalized to cover at least most forms of literature; on the other hand I don't think that it can simply be generalized to cover all forms of art. I don't regard this as a genuine limitation of my argument but rather as a reflection of the important differences that the various art forms exhibit.

I

When we think about this question we feel pulled, I think, in two apparently opposite directions. Imagine a case where we have always read a poem in a certain way, a way that is indubitably plausible, coherent and worth-while, and we then discover that the poet himself took it quite differently. What are we to say?

On the one hand we may very well feel a little uneasy, perhaps even unhappy, about this situation; we may have some difficulty in continuing to read the poem as before. This would be most acute, I think, if we

discovered that the poem had been intended as a complete hoax, but less extreme cases might trouble us too. That is certainly how Frank Cioffi would feel. His view is that 'in general' we have an 'implicit biographical or intentionalistic approach to literature'.[1] 'A conviction that the poet stands in a certain relation to his words conditions our response to them. That this should be so seems to me to be part of the "physiognomy" of literature (as Wittgenstein might have put it).'[2] But the feeling is shared, I suspect, even by those who argue most strongly that biographical facts about the author of a work are irrelevant to our apprehension of it. John Hospers, for instance, argues that whether or not an author was *sincere* in the production of a work should not concern us. If we discover that the author of an apparently worthwhile work was in fact insincere, '. . . our judgement of the work would not be changed; or, at any rate, I submit, it *should* not. . . .'[3] Isn't the way this is put rather significant? And can't we feel the same ambivalence even in Wimsatt and Beardsley's famous article 'The Intentional Fallacy'? Take the following footnote: 'And the history of words *after* a poem is written may contribute meanings which if relevant to the original pattern should not be ruled out by a scruple about intention.'[4] Don't we get the feeling here that the authors know only too well the force that such a scruple may exert? This feeling of unhappiness may seem to indicate that we do in fact regard facts about the intentions of the author as relevant to our interpretation of his work.

It is no good, I think, to reply here that if indeed we do feel like this, then the feeling is irrational and we ought to feel differently (which I take to be the force of Hospers's remark quoted above). Someone who said that would seem to be thinking that there is some identifiable phenomenon, poetry, whose nature determines what should be the proper attitude to it. But isn't it rather the other way round? Isn't it that the complex of our attitudes defines for us what poetry is?[5]

On the other hand we might (also) have quite a different feeling, the feeling that we ought simply to go on reading the poem as before, as the anti-intentionalists suggest, always supposing that we feel that our reading is the superior one (or at least not inferior). Imagine that I have always read Blake's *Jerusalem* in a way which is consistent, plausible and gives a worthwhile poem but which is quite at variance with the way that Blake himself understood it. *Why* should I not continue to read it as before? After all, it's my book. Why shouldn't I do with it as I please? Why should I give up something worth-while for something that is no better and may indeed be less worth-while? Someone may say at this point that if I do that it is no longer Blake's poem that I am reading. Well, why should that bother me?

It seems to me that one can feel the force of both of these ways of thinking, that it is hard to say that either of them is simply wrong. I should like to see whether they cannot be presented in such a way that the apparent conflict dissolves.

II

Let us look first at the argument for the importance of the author's intentions. Why might we feel unhappy on discovering that our interpretation of a poem is at variance with that of the author? I think that what lies behind this is our feeling that in such a case it is some sort of *accident* that we found a worthwhile reading in the first place; just as it would be a sort of accident, although much more extreme, if we were to discover that a worthwhile reading was possible of a set of words chosen at random and arranged randomly on the page. It is not because the author wrote something intended to yield a worthwhile reading that we found a worthwhile reading there.

But why should that bother us? After all the reading is still a good one however we have arrived at it. It bothers us, I think, because it gives a jolt to our general conception of what reading and writing poems amounts to. Why after all do we read, intensively, the things that we call poems, hoping to find there some rewarding experience? Why do we not glorify in this way the instructions on soap-flake packets, say, or produce our own 'poems' by choosing words at random out of Roget's *Thesaurus*? When the question is put like that the answer is obvious. If you did choose words at random in this way it is unlikely in the extreme that you would ever get a finished product susceptible of a plausible, coherent and worthwhile reading; or indeed a reading of any sort. We read these things sold by booksellers because we feel that there is some initial guarantee that what we have bought will, if we work at it at any rate, yield such a reading. And what provides that guarantee? Again, the answer is obvious. The poems in the book were produced consciously by someone on the whole pretty much like ourselves, trying precisely to produce something that could be read plausibly, coherently and rewardingly. The guarantee is not one of those money-back-if-not-one-hundred-per-cent-satisfied ones; occasionally we purchase what we decide to have been a conscious fraud or something we regard as a sincere failure to produce something worth-while. Occasionally. Now what would happen if we were to discover that our reading of a poem was in general completely at variance with that of the author (and of other readers), that there was no connection between the way poets intended their poems to be read and the way their

readers did in fact read them? We should soon come to feel that there was little point in singling out the productions of these people we call poets for special attention. And there would be little point in the poets publishing their works in the first place. So if we wished to continue to have the sort of experience that we had previously got from poetry, we might as well read, say, advertisement jingles (intensively, to find irony perhaps) or random collocations of words (intensively, to find some symbolic significance perhaps). Only, of course, we should be doomed to failure. In other words if we discovered that our reading of a poem was generally at variance with that of the author, then the activity of reading and writing poems would lose its significance. There would no longer be any point in it.

Of course we know that this bizarre fantasy will not come to pass; the nature of the activity guarantees it. But it gives us a bit of a jolt when from time to time the guarantee fails.

This, then, is the pressure behind our feeling of unease when we discover that our reading of a poem is different from that of the author: the recognition that poetry is an activity that depends for its significance upon some correlation between what the author puts into his work and what his readers get out of it. In that sense I think that there is indeed an implicit biographical reference in our approach to most forms of poetry.

III

Does this, then, leave us in the position where if we discover that the way we have always taken a poem is not the way the poet intended, we must be unhappy and rest with that feeling? That would seem to imply that the only licit procedure in trying to discover the meaning of a poem is to try to discover what the poet intended; and that when we discover that there is a divergence then we should abandon our reading of the poem (which may seem to us to be superior) in favour of that of the poet.

That seems to me to be a course which we cannot take. We do form our own interpretation of a poem (what else, after all, does reading the poem amount to?) and this is not something which it is within our power to abandon at the say-so of someone else even if that someone else be the poet himself. Now I suspect that where we have independent access to the interpretation a poet gives to his poem we are likely to find this in general the most acceptable one; for the poet will almost certainly know his poem in a depth which few readers could surpass. But there *will* be a few occasions where a poem will bear an interpretation superior to that given by the poet. And in those cases one cannot, I say, abandon one's

own reading at will. What would this amount to? When I read a poem the interpretation I give it is not something extrinsic that I *put upon* the words, something I can freely alter or ignore. So far as I am concerned the interpretation is something I *find within* the poem willy nilly.[6]

It might be replied here that I am missing the point; it is not that we *ought* to abandon our reading in favour of that of the poet, but that discovering his intention just might in fact alter the way we can read his poem. This seems to be the position of Cioffi. He says '. . . there is thus no doubt that there are cases where knowledge of an author's avowed intention in respect of his work exercises a coercive influence upon our apprehension of it'.[7] And this is a coercive influence which Cioffi thinks acceptable, indeed part of our approach to literature. He gives as an example the famous 'solider/soldier' crux in Yeats's poem *Among School Children*, where a printer's error gave a reading quite different in sense from what Yeats had intended, but one which was remarkably appropriate. Of this Cioffi says '. . . now that we know of the error, wouldn't we insist on the restoration of the lines as Yeats wrote them and regard the view that there is a military allusion in the lines as a mistake?'[8] The answer, I should have thought, is this. Of course we should insist on the restoration of the lines as Yeats wrote them. But we have many reasons for insisting on that, none of them apposite to the present discussion. For instance, we wish to have a standard text and how can we achieve that except by printing what the poet wrote? What other standard could we have? We also wish to have a text which will be useful for purely biographical purposes. Then again, we feel that authors have certain rights over what is published under their names. And to the second question, whether or not there is a military allusion in the lines, the only answer is to say: 'Which lines?' In the lines that Yeats wrote there certainly is not; in the lines that the printer produced there certainly is. And nothing has been said about how anyone might read the lines. And if someone felt that 'soldier' was a better word but felt coerced into reading 'solider' instead, nothing has been said about the acceptability or otherwise of that coercion.

Another move of Cioffi's should be mentioned here. He allows that the avowed intention of an author may not in fact have any coercive force. When? 'When the issue is of a complexity comparable to that which would cause us to discount his avowed intention in respect of something not a work of literature. To put it another way, we tend to think that there are cases where we over-ride the author's intention and persist in an interpretation which he has rejected but what we are really doing could less misleadingly be described as favouring one criterion of intention as against another.'[9] Now if we took this very far, it might well reduce

Cioffi's argument to a triviality; but I can't imagine that anyone *would* be tempted to take it very far. Look at one of his own examples, another crux from *Among School Children*. The fifth stanza begins with the lines:

> What youthful mother, a shape upon her lap
> Honey of generation had betrayed,
> . . . .

Yeats made it clear that, as far as he was concerned, the honey of generation is a drug that destroys the recollection of pre-natal freedom and that it is the child who is betrayed by it. John Wain argued[10] that the stanza read better if we took 'Honey of generation' to refer to the pleasure involved in conception and assumed that it is the mother who is betrayed. He seems explicitly to suggest that we ignore Yeats's own interpretation and simply read the poem as it seems best to us. Cioffi asks whether (granted the superiority of Wain's interpretation[11]) this does not show the irrelevance of intention, and thus count against his thesis. And he replies: 'Not necessarily. It could be interpreted as a case where we take the poem as better evidence of what the poet intended than his own explicit remarks on the subject. . . . For we may feel that he was mistaken as to what his intention was.'[12]

Isn't the trouble with this that it is just so hard to believe? It is not as though Yeats's own reading is a stupid one, or one that he couldn't possibly have held; in fact it fits in with all that we know about his thinking. And how exactly are we supposed to imagine that he had intended to refer to sexual pleasure but mistakenly thought he intended to refer to a drug that destroys the recollection of pre-natal freedom, arbitrarily connecting this with a phrase from Porphyry? Did he forget? And even if we could believe Cioffi's account, we still have a problem; for we are faced with the fact that Yeats now, at the time of writing the note, certainly intends a reference to Porphyry's drug. And if we allow his prior intention to exert a coercive influence, why shouldn't we allow this to his present one? Or are we to say that he is now mistaken about how he now intends the words to be taken? Could we really understand such a suggestion?

In order to convince us that 'an implicit biographical influence is at work even in Wain's interpretation',[13] Cioffi imagines a different case, one where Yeats's own reading was the same as Wain's, but that someone familiar with Yeats's own interpretation and sharing Yeats's views about pre-natal existence persisted in taking the phrase to refer to a pre-natal drug. Cioffi asks: 'Wouldn't our attitude to this interpretation be quite

different from our attitude to Wain's? Wouldn't we feel it perverse?'[14] The questions are evidently intended to be rhetorical, but it is not easy to see why the answers should be thought obvious. I can't speak for Cioffi or anyone else, but my own inclination (and that is all that it is) is to say that if someone really did believe in pre-natal existence and all that goes with it in Yeats's thinking, and if the lines really do bear that interpretation, then I don't see how I could regard it as perverse. And evidently I am not alone or we should not be involved in this discussion in the first place.

It is difficult to avoid the feeling here that somehow Cioffi's argument is just not *engaging* properly with that of Wimsatt and Beardsley. He asks a rhetorical question; they, or those who agree with them, simply give the wrong answer.

Now I have not denied that there may be cases where the intention of the author exercises a coercive influence over our reading; and, as I said earlier, I have the strong feeling that most anti-intentionalists know what it is like to feel the force of that influence. But isn't there a strong temptation to say that we should resist that influence? After all, why should we give up a worthwhile experience for an inferior one? Wouldn't it be sensible to school ourselves, so far as this is necessary, to resist the coercive force of the author's intentions whenever it seems like detracting from our reading?

What lies behind this temptation? Why do we feel that the author's intention is not one of the things that may legitimately exercise a coercive influence over our reading? I think that what lies behind this is the feeling that there is something fishy about the notion, often deployed without examination in this sort of discussion, of 'the meaning of a poem'. Let us look for a moment at an argument of Beardsley's designed to show that the meaning of, say, a poem cannot simply be identified with what the author intended that it should mean. He introduces his argument by saying that he is concerned with the distinction between what *words* mean and what *people* mean. And he says:

> Suppose someone utters a sentence. We can ask two questions: (1) What does the speaker mean (2) What does the sentence mean?[15]

And although in general these two questions will be answered in the same way, there may be occasions when the answers will be different:

> For what the sentence means depends not on the whim of the individual, and his mental vagaries, but upon public conventions of usage that are tied up with habit patterns in the whole speaking community.[16]

So we have a distinction between what *words* mean and what *people* mean, illustrated by a distinction between what a *sentence* means and what its *utterer* means. And Beardsley concludes that the distinction holds in the same way for poems; presumably this is a distinction between what a *poem* means and what the *poet* meant (or means).

Now leaving aside the question as to whether all is well concerning the distinction between what a sentence means and what the speaker means (and actually this is much more complicated than Beardsley lets on or realizes, perhaps), let us ask whether Beardsley has located any genuine analogy here. Is 'the meaning' of a sentence at all the same sort of thing as 'the meaning' of a poem? Well, when we talk of the meaning of a poem we wish to include such things as the presence or absence of irony, say, or particular emotional qualities that the poem may possess.[17] But are such things as these given by 'public conventions of usage'? Are they a matter of *usage* at all? In the case of some rather simple sentences they may be. Take, for instance, the sentence 'Go to hell!' There are obviously certain not very well defined limits on the emotional qualities which that sentence may express and they are determined, if you like, by public conventions of usage. And I dare say that there may be some sentences which it is difficult to utter without seeming to express irony. But no facts of 'public conventions of usage' will tell you whether the following lines[18] of Housman's 'are' ironic or not:

> Oh, God will save her, fear you not:
> Be you the men you've been,
> Get you the sons your fathers got,
> And God will save the Queen.

The point of the scare-quotes around the word 'are', of course, is this. One might ask: Did Housman intend the lines to be ironical? (A purely biographical question.) Or one might ask: How should we read them, how do they sound best? (A critical question.) But there is not some third question: Are the lines ironical? The critic, we may say, tries to show us how a poem may best be read or whether there is any worthwhile way of reading it at all; he tries to make available new ways of reading. He does not tell us what 'the meaning' of a poem is; for there is no such thing—unless you say simply that the meaning is either what the poet intended or the best way of reading it. As for the former suggestion one can but agree, of course, with the direction of Beardsley's argument: that poets, like anyone else, cannot simply make words mean what they wish. If you accept the latter suggestion, you will have to realize that there may be disagreements about what *is* the best way to read a poem, and

disagreements in which one does not want to say that one participant must be right and the other wrong.[19]

I do not mean that there are no limits whatever on the way a poem may be read; of course there are. 'Public conventions of usage', for instance, will impose certain limits. All I am saying is that these limits do not prevent a poem from being read, validly and fruitfully, in more than one way.

In studying a poem, trying to understand it, we are trying to discover how we may best read it. We are not looking for something called 'the meaning' which will determine how it should be read, for there is no such thing. And if there is no such thing, then what it is cannot be determined by the author's intentions. Is the *best way to read a poem* necessarily the way that the poet intended? That is a question that I *do* take to be clearly rhetorical.

IV

So we have two conclusions. On the one hand, in reading poems we cannot be wholly indifferent to the fact that these are things produced by people like ourselves and produced with certain intentions in mind; and that there must be some general connection between the way we read poems and the way in which their authors intended them to be read. On the other hand the author's intentions cannot simply determine the way we read his poem. Can these two conclusions be reconciled?

The first thing I wish to draw attention to is the reason why I think one gets the impression, mentioned earlier, that the arguments of, say, Cioffi fail to engage properly with those of Wimsatt and Beardsley. I think it is because they treat the question as if it were one having one and only one correct answer; and the answer is to be arrived at by examining the concepts involved. What in fact they are doing is offering recommendations how we *ought* to read poetry; each is recommending his own approach, but offering it disguised as a conceptual claim. Cioffi says, and of course he is right, that 'Literature is a motley'.[20] What he does not seem to allow for is the fact that the *reading* of literature is also a motley, that there are (or may be) different ways of reading the same poem, different reasons for finding it a rewarding experience, different sorts of experience to be had out of it. To go back to an earlier example, how should we take the phrase 'Honey of generation' in Yeats's poem? I said earlier that our attitudes define for us what poetry is. But it is no good to think that this will help us here, for if there *is* a problem the problem is just that our attitudes conflict. So the only answer seems to be that you must ask yourself what you think you are doing in reading the poem in the

first place. If someone thinks that reading the works of a poet is in some ways like being in contact with a real person, that the value of poetry for him derives from the fact that it is a way of being in contact with a very special and valuable sort of mind, then he will answer in one way. If he thinks that reading a body of poems is reading something which stands quite independent of its author, rather like reading philosophy, perhaps, then he will answer in another way. And someone else, the majority of us, I suspect, will just not be sure.

But aren't there any limits on the way that literature may be validly approached? Of course there are. All I am saying is that no theory about the author's intentions will help draw those limits.

Where, in general, such limits are is not an easy question to answer; indeed, I am not quite sure what a general answer would be. One point that is particularly relevant to the present discussion may help to make that clearer. I think that the relevance of information about the author's intentions will vary from poet to poet. Take, again, W. B. Yeats.[21] If you want to understand, say, the notion of *images* in Yeats's poetry, then I think that you will have to read some of his other works, including, for example, his *Autobiographies*; a reading of the poems will not, I think, get you the whole way. But to understand the force of this notion for Yeats is to understand something of his life. Thus an intensive reading of the corpus of Yeats's poetry will approximate to a study of *Yeats*. But there are poets of whom you would not be at all inclined to say this—Chaucer, for example. It's not simply that we don't have the biographical background to Chaucer's poetry in the way that we do for Yeats's; it's that the poetry just does not invite that sort of reading.

This is why, I think, many people find Yeats rather hard to take; his conception of what he is doing does not fit their expectations.

What I am saying is that there is no one right answer to the question what relevance the poet's own understanding of his work should have for our interpretation of it; it will vary from person to person, and probably for any one individual it will vary from poet to poet. So there is no one right answer to the question what it is rational to do about the jolt that we may feel on discovering that our understanding of a poem is different from that of the author. Certainly, no theory about the author's intentions will help us. But one negative point may be made. Our general concern for the author's intentions cannot dictate that we should never disregard them. The phenomenon of poetry, I said, demands some general connection between what the poet intends that we get out of his work and what we do in fact get out of it; but that tells us nothing about any individual case. The general connection can withstand the occasional exception.

REFERENCES

[1] 'Intention and Interpretation in Criticism', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 1963; reprinted in Cyril Barret, *Collected Papers on Aesthetics*, to which my page references refer. In this case, p. 176.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 182.

[3] 'The Concept of Artistic Expression', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 1954–5; my reference is to pp. 149 f. of the version reprinted in Hospers, *Introductory Readings in Aesthetics*.

[4] First published in the *Sewannee Review*, 1946. The footnote I quote is from Part IV of the article.

[5] This is a view which, if I understand him properly, I share with Cioffi.

[6] Which is not to deny that there may be occasions when I can happily read a poem in different ways.

[7] *Op. cit.*, p. 173.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] *Op. cit.*, pp. 173 f.

[10] *Interpretations*, ed. John Wain.

[11] Which, in fact, I do not altogether grant. Leaving aside the demands of sense, Wain's interpretation seems to me to be ruled out by the syntax of the stanza, and by the words 'and that' in the third line (a fact obscured in Cioffi's article by the mangling which his quotation has undergone at some stage).

[12] *Op. cit.*, p. 175.

[13] *Op. cit.*, p. 176.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] *Aesthetics*, p. 25.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] This is also Beardsley's view; cf. *Aesthetics*, p. 26.

[18] From his poem *1887*; Beardsley's own example.

[19] One could imagine this happening over the words 'Honey of generation', for instance, if the stanza really could bear both senses.

[20] *Op. cit.*, p. 183.

[21] It doesn't really matter whether what I say is actually true of Yeats; it is enough that one could imagine such a case. In fact I think it *is* true, and it is not altogether surprising in view of Yeats's own understanding of what writing poetry amounted to. Take the following, for instance: 'I have no sympathy with the mid-Victorian thought to which Tennyson gave his support, that a poet's life concerns nobody but the poet himself. A poet is by the very nature of things a man who lives with entire sincerity, or rather, the better his poetry the more sincere his life. His life is an experiment in living and those that come after have a right to know it. Above all it is necessary that the lyric poet's life should be known, that we should understand that his poetry is no rootless flower but the speech of a man. . . .' From unpublished notes for a London lecture on 'Contemporary Poetry', dictated in Dublin in 1910 (quoted in Richard Ellmann's *Yeats: the Man and the Masks*, p. 5.)

ON THE NATURE OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

Haig Khatchadourian

I

In 'Family Resemblances and the Classification of Works of Art'[1] I attempted to show in general terms that many art-names in common employment, including 'painting' and 'sculpture', and many of the more specific art-names in each case, express 'family resemblance' concepts and so are open textured.[2] In this paper I shall attempt to show, among other things, some of the important consequences of the attempt, by some aestheticians, to provide an essentialist account of these concepts, and so in effect to convert them into closed concepts. For the purposes of this essay I shall concentrate on painting and sculture, and will take as the main object of my discussion F. A. Trapp's[3] and Sir Herbert Read's[4] attempts to define (the first, in effect, to redefine) the concepts of painting and sculpture respectively. I say 'in effect to redefine' because Trapp actually claims that his efforts provide the putative necessary and sufficient conditions of all paintings.[5] Thus I describe Trapp's endeavour as an attempt to redefine *painting* only because I believe, contrary to him, that painting lacks an essence in the traditional sense.

The fact that Trapp and Read themselves believe that they are describing the nature of their particular art-form rather than proposing or stipulating, *inter alia*, a reclassification of some of the objects hitherto called paintings, or sculptures, explains the fact that they make no effort to show the alleged desirability, e.g. the utility, of thinking and talking in the way they in effect do.

In the second place I shall attempt to show, both directly and by drawing some of its more important implications, the undesirability of the proposed redefinition of painting and the desirability of retaining the present open and non-essentialist character of the concept.[6] In the course of the proposed examination of Trapp's and Read's views the nature of the two art-forms as artists, critics and laymen generally conceive of them should become clearer. This constitutes the positive and indeed the more important aim of this essay.

For convenience and clarity I shall consider Trapp's and Read's views in separate sections. But the fact that both attempts exhibit certain common logical features or certain basic similarities, and so have some of the same implications, will necessitate considerable cross-reference.

The claim that certain features or types of features constitute necessary and sufficient conditions of painting, or sculpture, can mean one of two things. It may be, first (1) a semantic or conceptual (truth-) claim, a claim about the nature of the concept *painting*, or the concept *sculpture*. That is, it may consist in the claim that people conventionally employ these concepts on the strength of these putative necessary and sufficient conditions; moreover, that these concepts are correctly applicable only to things that possess these features.[7] But (2) the above may be a different, empirical (truth-) claim, viz. that all things (hitherto) conventionally called paintings, or sculptures *actually* possess certain common and peculiar features, and that nothing else does,[8] whether or not these features are conventional 'defining features' of paintings, or sculptures. In the light of the foregoing two theses my general negative thesis (which my criticism of Trapp and Read is intended to support) becomes this: that, first, it is false that the features singled out by them are actually possessed by *all* things conventionally called paintings, or sculptures, and/or are possessed by them alone; which shows that, second, these features cannot be necessary and/or sufficient conditions for the current application of 'painting', or 'sculpture'.

With this we turn to our two arts in order to see, among other things, whether our negative theses are true.

II

THE NATURE OF PAINTING

Trapp's central claim, proclaimed at the outset of his essay, is that: 'In contrast to other visual arts, such as sculpture and architecture, painting has solely and specifically visual meaning. It serves no utilitarian function, as architecture usually does, nor does it actually occupy three-dimensional space, as both the other forms do'.[9] The alleged differentiae of painting *vis-à-vis* sculpture and architecture, Trapp therefore claims, are (*a*) 'having solely visual meaning', (*b*) 'lacking a utilitarian function', and (*c*) 'not occupying three-dimensional space' (or, positively, 'occupying two-dimensional space'). (*a*) and (*c*) are supposed to differentiate painting from sculpture and architecture, while (*a*) snd (*b*) are supposed to distinguish it from architecture. Moreover (*a*) and (*c*) seem to be linked by virtue of the (generally) two-dimensional nature of the physical media employed by painting. Whether or not this is true it is clear that (*b*) is logically unconnected with either (*a*) or (*c*), unless (*a*) is interpreted in a way which

excludes the property 'having a utilitarian function'. But this can only be done by defining 'meaning' in a very inclusive and quite unusual sense, such that having a utilitarian function counts as a sort of 'meaning'. But there is no indication that Trapp thinks of meaning in this way.

Trapp does not tell us whether he regards any of the foregoing three features as logically sufficient, though it appears that he thinks of each of them as logically necessary, for anything to count as a painting. The special attention he gives to (*a*) suggests that he thinks of it as the most important of the three putative differentiae—and perhaps it is, for him, a sufficient as well as a necessary condition of painting. In any event I shall attempt to show in this section that neither it nor (*c*) is a logically necessary condition of painting, and that the three do not jointly constitute a sufficient condition of painting. Although (*b*) is a necessary condition of painting *as art*, the same is true of sculpture—and even architecture—as art. In the case of the latter, it is part of the concept in so far as architecture is a fine art and not a technic. (See Section III.)

A. In order to ascertain whether (*a*) constitutes a necessary or sufficient condition of painting we must ferret out the intended meaning of 'having visual meaning.' Trapp does not explicitly tell us what he understands by the term so I shall give my own definition; but I think it does justice to what he appears to have in mind. Thus: 'An artifact or some other perceptual object X, whether natural or man-devised, has visual meaning' is equivalent to 'X exhibits evaluative or non-evaluative visual aesthetic features (A-features).' In the former case the A-features are 'positive' or 'negative', good-making or poor-making, in terms of some standard or standards of evaluation. Given this definition Trapp's first suggested differentia would be: 'Paintings (unlike sculptures and works of architecture) have (can have?) solely visual A-features: they cannot have, for example, tactile A-features.' This implies that in the case of paintings, as opposed to sculptures and works of architecture, *there are in fact no tactile A-features* (perhaps no such features can ever exist) for which tactile non-aesthetic features (N-features), such as tactile texture and form, are responsible. If so, it is analytically true that running one's hand over the *Mona Lisa* does not (cannot?) give 'aesthetic pleasure'; whereas we can get a great deal of 'aesthetic pleasure'—pleasure caused by our perception of good-making A-features—from looking at it. For the purely visual N-features of the painting, such as its colour scheme and composition, as well as the visual texture of the painted surface, give rise to a large number of good-making A-features (allegedly) perceived with the eye,[10] such as dynamism, graceful and harmonious flow of lines, repose, a high degree of visual unity, and the like.

My view is (*a*) that some paintings do exhibit tactile A-features to a limited extent. What is more important here, such qualities are sometimes good-making features of paintings. From this it would follow that a thing's possession of tactile as well as visual A-features does not automatically disqualify it from being what we normally call a painting. In other words, 'having solely visual meaning' is not a *necessary* condition of painting. Collages and 'relief' paintings—paintings that create contoured, three-dimensional surfaces by heavy application of paint, are obvious examples. One would therefore expect Trapp to exclude collages from the domain of painting; and indeed, it can be argued with some plausibility that some collages, at least, are best regarded as borderline cases of paintings *vis-à-vis* constructions. Trapp characteristically refuses to acknowledge the openness of the concept of painting *vis-à-vis* sculpture (and vice versa), and unhesitatingly classifies collages as paintings.[21] He also states:

> Whether or not a *collage*, for example, has much actual three-dimensionality , . . , its appeal is *mostly* to the sense of sight within the established reference of its enframement. Even the textural elements, such as cloth, metal, or wood *ultimately* function in much the same way as paint, which may also have a variety of textures, with all that may imply of a direct sensuous appeal. That some of these efforts tempt also the sense of touch and seem at times more intended to invade the world of the spectator than to remain apart from actuality recalls historical attempts at *trompe l'oeil*.[1]

The word 'mostly', which I have italicized, betrays Trapp. (Also, what is 'ultimately' supposed to mean?) He also states that '. . . a van Gogh painting may sometimes have more "relief" than an Egyptian bas-relief sculpture'.[13] He gives the following reason for his view that the former lacks 'tactile meaning': '. . . in all these examples—a van Gogh "relief" painting, *trompe l'oeil*, Baroque ceiling paintings, etc.—the artist has had to relate his elements to each other within the two-dimensional limits of the enframement. These factors of two-dimensional structure of 'design' are common to all paintings, if not exclusive only to painting'.[14] This is the wrong reason, since the question of whether a perceptual object possesses or lacks tactile A-features (meaning) is logically distinct from its two- or three-dimensional character; and, as we shall see, there is no relation of entailment, either way, between a thing's possession or non-possession of tactile A-features and its being two- or three-dimensional. Moreover it is false that in a 'relief' painting (unlike a *trompe l'oeil*) the pictorial structure or 'design' is only two-dimensional or involves only two-dimensional factors. Finally, Trapp admits that non-

paintings (sculptures) may also be more or less two-dimensional, i.e. that his *third* alleged differentia does not constitute a sufficient condition of painting. I should add that the three-dimensional character of collages and relief paintings also prevents it from being a necessary condition of painting. But more of this later.

(2) A related point is that with respect to much of the above paintings are in the same boat with mosaics, stained glass, films, slides and photographs, whenever these things qualify as art in the word's descriptive sense; yet they are not either sculptures or works of architecture, and admittedly not paintings either. For if paintings lack tactile meaning, as Trapp maintains, so do they. Thus (*a*) would not suffice to distinguish paintings from these latter productions. Actually, the textured surface of a mosaic can give rise to tactile A-features; and in a good mosaic constructed with a view to tactile as well as visual appeal these features may enhance the visual A-features; and vice versa. To a lesser extent the same is true of photographs; but conventional stained glass has little or no tactile appeal, while films and colour transparencies projected on a screen completely lack such appeal. They are better described than most paintings as possessing, at best, visual meaning only. (Cf. also purely visual phenomena such as a sunrise, a rainbow or a mirror image. But the former two are natural phenomena and can be readily distinguished from pre-twentieth-century visual art, if not from all contemporary visual art as well. Yet even here borderline cases are possible; e.g. we can imagine someone producing 'artificial' rainbows or making mirror images and calling them art.)

(3) Can Trapp rightly maintain that *all* things called paintings have (better, *need* have) *visual* meaning? The answer is I think 'Yes', in the *descriptive* use of 'meaning' in which I earlier defined 'visual meaning'. There is, however, another, evaluative use of 'meaning' in which only good or fairly good paintings (or any other kind of art) have some kind of (e.g. visual) meaning. In this sense to say that a painting X is a meaningless jumble of colours and lines (or shapes)[15] is to condemn it as, for example, incoherent, and so lacking in aesthetic value. In general it is to condemn it as lacking a significant number of, or any, *positive* A-features. For if incoherent, it cannot properly represent, symbolize or otherwise mean anything, certainly not anything comprehensible; unless its aim is precisely to create an effect of disorganization, incoherence or chaos. In that case, it would be meaningful: its aesthetic significance would consist precisely in, or include, the absence of phenomenological and affective coherence.

The fact that in the evaluative sense only good paintings can have visual

or any other kind of meaning does not affect Trapp's thesis. What matters for it is the descriptive sense of the word we discussed earlier. Consequently his claim that all paintings have visual meaning does not really restrict the class of paintings to *good* paintings, and so is not an honorific redefinition of 'painting' in terms of a chosen criterion of artistic (or painterly) excellence (Morris Weitz).

B. Let us turn to Trapp's alleged third differentia (*c*), namely that unlike sculpture and architecture painting does not 'actually occupy three-dimensional space'. I pointed out in (A) above that in talking about visual meaning 'Trapp at one point shifts from "having visual interest or appeal" to "appeal to the sense of sight", to "occupying two-dimensional space".' But as I claimed there, there is at best only a one-way logical relation between the two concepts. For even regular two-dimensional paintings can have some tactile appeal as art; even though, perhaps, all sculptures and works of architecture also have some tactile meaning in the descriptive sense. In other words, 'X has solely visual meaning' does, perhaps, entail 'X occupies only two-dimensional space'; though 'X occupies only two-dimensional space' does not entail 'X necessarily has solely visual meaning'. Trapp can consistently accept the thesis that regular two-dimensional paintings can have some tactile appeal *as art*, only if he argues that they cannot have such appeal *as paintings*. But this would not be a very happy position, since it immediately raises the question: '*Qua* what other kind of art, then, does (or can) it have this kind of meaning?' And this appears not to have an acceptable answer except '*Qua* no other kind of art, but only *qua* painting'. For no painting as a whole can also be a sculpture or a work of architecture; and *strictly speaking* no painting can be part of a sculpture or a work of architecture: though there are painted sculptures, and the walls and ceiling of a building may be covered with murals. In the latter case we distinguish the architecture and the painting, logically and in fact; in the former case we speak of the work as a whole as a (painted) sculpture and do not think of the painted surface as a painting. Thus painted surfaces may be part of a sculpture, but only because they are not then called paintings; while if they are (called) paintings, they are not part of anything except larger paintings, in diptychs, triptychs, and so on.

The situation is different in certain respects with the décor of a theatrical presentation, in an opera or a dance. Paintings are part of the total work called the presented opera, play or dance; but then theatre, dance and opera are normally considered composite arts, in contrast to painting, sculpture and architecture. Moreover there is a stricter, narrower use of 'play', 'dance' and 'opera' in which the décor and other aspects of a play's,

a dance's or an opera's performance are not ordinarily considered part of the work but of its performance in a sense in which the work and its performances are logically distinguished.[16]

The question now is whether painting can be sharply delimited from sculpture and architecture partly or wholly on the basis of the spatial media employed in each case. The answer is clearly 'no'; rather, we find that there are various resemblances as well as differences here between painting and other kinds of visual art—not only sculpture and architecture, but (as we should expect if painting is a family resemblance concept) collages, stained glass, drawings and pastels, which in some respects form a loose family with painting at its head or centre. It also has certain other similarities, respecting the media employed, to films and photographs, which (when they rise to the level of art in the descriptive sense) constitute another 'family' of visual arts more or less distinct from the 'family' of sculptures, works of architecture, bas-reliefs, mosaics and engravings. Further, the line between painting and drawing is not sharp, since pastels fall somewhere between the two. Likewise, in another logical direction, with lithographs, woodcuts, engravings and etchings.

The upshot is that no single quality or kind of quality distinguishes all members of a given family of visual arts from all members of another family of visual arts or genres; further, no single set of qualities distinguishes all paintings, say, from all sculptures, or all sculptures from all works of architecture. One main consequence of this is that the demarcation-lines between them are non-sharp, always admitting of actual or possible exceptions or doubtful cases.

Trapp is aware of this last fact, as well as other facts mentioned above; but he fails to see that the former is due to the non-essentialist character of the concepts of painting and other visual arts. For instance, he says:

> Distinctions even between sculpture and painting are not always simple. Although it may be agreed that sculpture has a three-dimensional surface, the margins of such a distinction are often blurred by exceptions. Many low reliefs appeal so minimally to our realization of actual three-dimensionality as to find much of their meaning within the contexts normally reserved for painting. This is especially true in considering polychromed sculptured reliefs which are in large measure the products of painters, as well as of sculptors.[17]

He continues:

> One must realize too that our present separation of the two arts painting and sculpture is abnormal within the range of historical practice. Much, if not most of the world's sculpture was once polychrome, and often combined with painting without sense of distinction.[8]

But this involves a conceptual confusion; since these empirical facts have no tendency to establish the logical fact that the concepts of painting and sculpture are open with respect to each other. His reasoning is of the same order as arguing that the concepts 'play', 'opera' and 'dance' are open because these arts (or their enactment) involve the collaboration of several art forms, such as décor and music.

III

THE NATURE OF SCULPTURE

Read characterizes sculpture as follows: 'The peculiarity of sculpture as art is that it creates a three-dimensional object *in space*. Painting may strive to give, on a two-dimensional plane, the illusion of space, but it is space itself as a perceived quantity that becomes the particular concern of the sculptor.'[19] Connected with this is the thesis that sculpture is primarily an art of 'touch-space', whereas painting is primarily an art of 'sight-space'.[20] He says: 'For the sculptor, tactile values are not illusions to be created on a two-dimensional plane: they constitute a reality to be conveyed directly, as existent mass. Sculpture is an art of *palpation*—an art that gives satisfaction in the touching and handling of objects. That, indeed, is the only way in which we can have direct sensation of the three-dimensional shape of an object'.[21] Thus there are certain (aesthetic) qualities that 'can be conveyed *only* by the art of sculpture, but by an art of sculture completely emancipated from painterly prejudices'.[22] In the third place, 'painterly sculpture'—base-reliefs and other sculptures which are primarily or wholly visual—can only give 'a limited pleasure';[23] it has limited 'expressive power'.[34] To this category he consigns ancient Egyptian and, with qualification, Greek sculpture, as well as the typical Renaissance reliefs:

> indeed the whole tradition of sculpture—until . . . Rodin began to reconsider the aesthetics of sculpture—was to create a pictorial illusion in which the ponderability of the material was etherealized. . . . The sculptor worked with and for the eye and never conceived his work as possessing any other unity than that of a visual image.[25]

This brief summary of Read's basic thesis shows, first, that like Trapp he attempts to provide an essentialist account of sculpture (and painting). He also claims that the creation of a three-dimensional object in space is the differentia of sculpture; which at first sight seems to constitute partial agreement and partial disagreement with Trapp: agreement in so far as for Trapp 'the creation of a three-dimensional object in space' (D_1) is a differentia of sculpture *vis-à-vis* painting; disagreement in so far as Trapp



regards this as one of two differentiae of sculpture *vis-à-vis* painting, not the only differentia as Read seems to hold. I say 'seems to hold' since he gives us, not indeed other differentiae, but two alleged near-differentiae of sculpture in addition to differentia D_1.[26] For in his definition of sculpture Read insensibly passes from D_1 to 'Space itself *as a perceived quantity* is the particular concern of the sculptor' (D_2), and then to 'Sculpture is primarily an art of "touch-space" ' (D_3). That D_2 and D_3 are distinct from D_1 and from each other is seen from the fact that a structure's being a three-dimensional object actually enables it to be seen as a three-dimensional object in space, makes three-dimensional space a perceptual phenomenon. The latter is an empirical consequence of the former and (by that very fact alone) is not identical with it.[27] (It would be interesting to inquire whether the fact that a painting creates a two-dimensional 'object' has the empirical consequence that it can only succeed in giving the illusion of space rather than present three-dimensional space as a perceived quantity.) Again, the distinctness of D_3 from D_1 and D_2 is not difficult to see. To see its distinctness from D_2 it suffices to note that perceiving (three-dimensional) space, as a sensible quantity, may be a visual or a tactile experience. D_2 may be visual or tactile or both; while D_3 is primarily the former. This means that as it stands, without qualification, the proposition expressed by the sentence 'In sculpture we primarily perceive three-dimensional space' does not entail the proposition expressed by: 'The perceived space of sculpture is primarily a touch-space rather than a sight-space'. The distinctness of D_1 and D_3 can be seen essentially along the same lines.

It is noteworthy that D_3 coincides remarkably well with Trapp's second putative differentia of painting *vis-à-vis* sculpture, viz. differentia (*c*), especially as I explicated 'meaning' in 'visual meaning'. One difference, though, is that Trapp nowhere claims that sculpture (in contrast to painting) is *primarily* a tactile art. Also, Trapp does not state that the term 'tactile meaning' means 'tactile sensations (perceptions)'; though 'providing tactile perceptions' may be part of what he means by 'having tactile meaning', by analogy with 'having visual meaning'. For by the latter he appears to mean, in part, 'providing visual perceptions'. Significantly, Read does not deny to painting *all* tactile values;[28] he does not—and cannot—make as categorical a distinction between the two arts as Trapp does. Consonant with this he makes the controversial claim that 'an art owes its particularity to the emphasis or preference given to any organ of sensation',[29] though this is obviously closer to the view that the concepts of the various art-forms are 'family resemblance' concepts than to strict essentialism.

It remains for us to evaluate Read's major claims, particularly D_2 and D_3; since we have, in effect, dealt with D_1 in relation to Trapp's view.

(1) '*Space as a perceived quantity is the particular concern of the sculptor*' (D_2)

In the first place, Read does not appear to mean, or mean primarily, space (*a*) 'as a relationship between groups of objects.'[30] (Cf. what he says about ancient Egyptian and Greek sculpture.) And though he says that 'The idea of space as such, existing even if it is not filled by something, was unknown to the Greeks—with the exception of the atomistic school',[31] the creation of (*b*) empty or (*c*) inner or enclosed space cannot be the primary concern of the sculptor as he conceives it. For first, limited empty spaces, though not space as a whole, can be created by a group of objects; and that is not what D_2 is about. As for 'inner space' *as a perceived quantity*, this has been rarely exemplified in Western sculpture until recently, with such sculptors as Henry Moore; except in the modest degree in which, for example, the arms and legs of human or animal statues create some 'inner' sculptural space. It has not been the concern of most sculptors, most of the time: Rodin, whom Read regards as a leader of the new aesthetic of sculpture, being no exception. Finally, the creation of inner spaces *in the usual sense* of 'inner' or 'interior space' is *primarily* the concern of the architect, not the sculptor; though I disagree with Bruno Zevi, who claims that the creation of inner space is the *differentia* of architecture *vis-à-vis* sculpture (and painting).[32] For some sculpture does—and by its use of ponderable masses, sculpture can always—create inner spaces in the usual sense. Whether or not the sort of inner space created in each case is similar is, however, a significant question.

What I think Read primarily means, or should mean if D_2 is to stand any scrutiny, is either (*d*) that sculpture usually creates 'filled' three-dimensional spaces as a perceived quantity, spaces *created* by the three-dimensional solid masses which constitute the sensible medium of sculptures, and/or (*e*) that sculpture usually creates relief *as a perceived quantity* or provides (visual) 'sensations of depth'.[33]

Starting with (*d*), it is noteworthy that in ordinary language we say that a body fills or occupies (three-dimensional) space; but by the same token this space itself is an object of thought, not perception. What is perceived is the three-dimensional surfaces of the space-occupying bodies. But for Read's and our purposes, i.e. as far as space as a perceived quantity in architecture, sculpture or painting, etc., is concerned, what is essential is something other than this filled space that we ordinarily talk about.

Now sculpture *is* distinguished from painting in terms of (*d*) above;

for one thing, we get different three-dimensional views or perspectives in moving around a sculpture whereas in many cases there is no such thing as 'moving around a painting'. Of course paintings in the round can be made, mounted on a revolving drum or sphere, say, or on a stationary cylinder round which the viewers can walk. Even then we cannot get different three-dimensional views or perspectives of the painting unless it happens to be in relief. In that case some but not much of this sculpture-like visual quality can be had. The trouble is that this distinguishes architecture as well as sculpture from *most* painting. The same is true of (*e*) above, viz. relief in sculpture as a perceived quantity. Read, following Rodin, rightly emphasizes the importance of this for (certain kinds of) sculpture; and it is true that this kind of 'real' as opposed to pictorial or 'illusory' depth distinguishes (for Read, it distinguishes Rodin's and post-Rodin) sculpture from most, i.e. 'flat' paintings. This feature also occurs in architecture. It is true that given the specific ways in which relief is created, its perceived quality and so its effect differ significantly with the two arts. But the difference is, I think, not one of kind but of degree, and no sharp lines are actually drawn at this point, in people's usual classification of certain artifacts as sculptures or as works of architecture.

To sum up, it appears that any possible sense of 'creates a three-dimensional space as a perceived quantity' in which this phrase applies to sculpture, also applies to architecture—and vice versa. Thus D_2 does not serve or suffice to distinguish sculpture uniquely from painting. Nor can D_1 and D_2 together do so.

(2) '*Sculpture creates primarily touch-space* (*whereas painting creates sight-space*)' (D_3)

This is really the heart of Read's thesis about sculpture, and what he regards as the most important near-differentia or differentia of that art. What Read means by this can perhaps be summarized as follows. (1) Touch-space is the apprehension of (*a*) the volume or bulk of objects, and (*b*) their mass and ponderability. The former comes from touching the object, the latter from handling it. (2) Tactile associations—memory or sensory motion connections—are involved in visual perception. For instance, 'we may have an intuition of ponderability without actually lifting the objects, merely from our generalized knowledge of the relative weights of such materials as marble, clay, bronze, and lead'.[34] (3) 'Sculpture owes its individuality as an art to unique plastic qualities, to the possession and exploitation of a special kind of sensibility'.[35] This specifically plastic sensibility involves three factors: (*a*) a sensation of the tactile quality of surfaces, (*b*) a sensation of volume as denoted by plane surfaces,

and (*c*) a synthetic realization of the mass and ponderability of the object.[36]

In evaluating these claims, I should say right away that I completely accept propositions (1) and (2) above. But this, rather than helping Read's thesis (3), only helps to show that it requires various important qualifications which restrict its application. The mass and ponderability of a painted canvas, say, are admittedly irrelevant to it as a painting or as art in general, in a way in which they are not irrelevant to *some* sculptures as such and so as art. But the three-dimensional surfaces of a 'relief' painting can provide some sensations of three-dimensional touch-space; though considerably less than sculpture in the round.[37] (Note that 'flat' paintings can provide an apprehension of a two-dimensional touch-space. But this is immaterial for Read's thesis.) Further—to show that (3) is not quite true in another direction, i.e. with respect to sculpture *vis-à-vis* other kinds of art that utilise three-dimensional substances or bodies as their media—various kinds of art, or artifacts that sometimes rise to the level of art, *can* exploit the plastic sensibility that Read wrongly thinks is uniquely associated with sculpture. Thus Delft or Chinese ceramics, Corinthian vases and artistic jewelry, leatherwork and metalwork not normally classified as sculpture, can provide, just as much as some sculpture, the three types of tactile sensations described in (3) (*a*)–(*c*) above. Persian rugs and Gobelin tapestries do so too; though it can be plausibly argued that as in the case of paintings the sensations of mass and ponderability provided by them are almost always irrelevant to them as putative works of art. But what about sculpture itself? Clearly only some sculptures can satisfy condition (3*c*), because of their size or weight (think of e.g. Michelangelo's *David* or *Moses*); while others cannot satisfy (3*b*) or even (3*a*) either; e.g. the gargoyles and the statues of saints on the exteriors of medieval European cathedrals, which are far beyond the physical reach of most people. Again, some statues are placed in such positions that going around them is impossible. Now we may well deplore this; and I would agree that in the case of *some* sculptures we get only part of the aesthetic pleasure they can provide if we are unable to touch or handle them. But the fact remains that an 'object' of a certain kind does not cease to be (what we call) a sculpture just because we are unable to enjoy it tactually. What is more important here, the capacity of *all* sculpture (but also rugs, tapestry, ceramics, jewellery, etc.) to provide, in *principle*, tactile sensations of types (3) (*a*)–(*c*) by virtue of utilizing a physical body or substance as a medium, does not, I think, constitute a *condition* for employing the word 'sculpture' in ordinary or even professional artistic discourse. Sensations described under (3) (*a*)–(*c*) are only (factually or synthetically) 'consequential' upon something's being what we call a sculpture, not a logically necessary

condition of it. Thus it is false that (i) the satisfaction of conditions (3) (*a*)–(*c*) is logically necessary for the normal application of 'sculpture', and also false that (ii) all sculptures actually satisfy that condition, though all can do so in principle.

My general line of argument against proposition (3) finds further support when we turn to proposition (2) above. I agree that tactile associations evoked visually are quite important with respect to some or all sculpture. Also, I am willing to maintain that they can be more expressive in sculpture than in painting because of the greater variety of physical materials at the former's disposal. But this does not warrant the conclusion that sculptures are primarily 'intended'[38] (*qua* called sculpture?) to provide tactile sensations.

Again, in distinguishing from visual perception the alleged unique 'plastic sensibility' involved in the enjoyment of sculpture Read says 'The sensibility required for this effort of realization (or the plastic sensibility) *has nothing in common with* . . . the visual impression of a three-dimensional form on a two-dimensional plane'.[39] But this defines 'visual perception' too narrowly, making Read's positive thesis (3) quite trite—a truism or a tautology. For he ignores the patent fact that tactile associations of the qualities of surfaces and volumes, or even of mass and ponderability, can also be provided by, among other things, the visual impressions of a skilfully executed three-dimensional form on a two-dimensional plane.[40]

Finally, and perhaps most important of all, what Read essentially does is to propose a *criterion* or *standard of excellence* in sculpture under the guise of describing the nature of that art. Indeed this is the way in which we have interpreted him so far in order to put his thesis logically in as strong a position as possible; or, at least, in compliance with his ostensive intention. In emphasizing the importance of this putative good-making feature he unnecessarily though quite predictably demotes a traditional criterion-feature of merit in sculpture[41] involving visual sensations and therefore visual qualities. The latter is seen in his astounding downgrading of what he calls 'painterly' sculpture—which means, for him, practically the whole of classical and much of pre-Rodin modern Western sculpture! But he does not go as far as to propose, in effect, an honorific redefinition of the concept of sculpture, in the way Morris Weitz defines this activity, or even propose a non-honorific redefinition of it. He does not refuse to apply the label 'sculpture' to 'painterly sculpture', and does not explicitly condemn it as poor sculpture; but he certainly regards it as inferior to sculpture that exploits the tactile resources of its three-dimensional medium. Thus he really tells us what he believes sculpture *should* do or

be like in order to be sculpture *at its best.*[42] For instance, he quotes with approval Worringer's statements:

> The Egyptian relief is from the very first complete in its pure surface character. . . . The third dimension, the dimension by which we are actually aware of depth, from which all that is more profound in the drama of artistic creation draws its inspiration, is not present at all as a resistant in the artistic consciousness of the Egyptian.[43]

It is clear that Read thinks of the third dimension as the source or condition of artistic value in sculpture, not merely as a condition of something's being a sculpture, good, bad or indifferent. (But the two are connected.) Again:

> For centuries the Western world has admired this kind of sculpture [the kind in which 'the palpability of the sculptured object' is ignored and the senses are confined 'within a pictorial framework']. Must we now be robbed of our simple pleasure? Of course not; as one kind of sculpture, giving a specific though limited pleasure, the typical reliefs of the Renaissance are justified. . . . There are other qualities that can be conveyed *only* by the art of sculpture, but by an art of sculpture completely emancipated from painterly prejudices.[44]

IV

Finally, is it advisable to adopt Trapp's views considered as revisionary recommendations? Reclassification of empirical phenomena is a practice in the physical and social sciences in the light of newly discovered uniformities or as called for by new hypotheses or theories supplanting earlier classifications based on superficial resemblances or real or imagined common characteristics. But whatever the theoretical or practical advantages, if any, of scientific classifications or reclassifications of groups of phenomena in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, this procedure appears to have no practical or theoretical advantages but only drawbacks in the present type of case. For the proposed restricted and/or extended employment of 'painting' in fact makes not for greater semantic exactness but for confusion in practical and theoretical discussions of art. The current ordinary employment of 'painting' is so well entrenched that, at best, only professional artists, critics and aestheticians would want to adopt the new way of talking in question. Thus the existence, side by side, of the current and proposed usages would lead to unnecessary ambiguities and other verbal issues. Indeed this may also infect the theoretical discussions of professionals on painting and architecture. Moreover what theoretical gain are these putative essentialist recommendations supposed

to provide? The main theoretical advantage that essentialist concepts in general have is that they are closed and *in that sense* more precise than open concepts; consequently no *theoretical* problems, and no hard semantic decisions, are involved in any attempt to ascertain whether a particular essentialist and closed concept applies or does not apply to any newly encountered—discovered, invented or created—thing. But to extend to the various less general art-concepts a point which Morris Weitz emphasizes in 'The Role of Theory in Aesthetics' with regard to the concept of art as a whole, the openness of these concepts is an important advantage given the essentially creative character of art in the West. Further, as I pointed out in Section II, Trapp's recommendation does not really succeed in fashioning a closed concept. So he cannot claim for his proposal the putative advantages of closed as opposed to the ordinary, open-textured concepts: as well as being saddled with the practical drawbacks mentioned earlier.

There are special reasons for my rejection of Read's position concerning sculpture. I see no valid grounds for assigning to tactile sensations the pre-eminent position he assigns to them; particularly as he tends to downplay their visual qualities, including the 'visual' associations of tactile sensations. Both types of qualities can be important to the same or to different extents; in the latter case, not always to the advantage of the tactile qualities. Some works are good because of their satisfaction of the tactile criteria; others for their satisfaction of the visual criteria, or both types of criteria. Indeed, the harmonious interplay of visual and tactile qualities is in my view more important than their separate satisfaction of vision and touch. For instance, a sculpture that mainly or wholly satisfies the sense of sight may be a better work than one which satisfies both sight and touch in a high degree, but whose visual qualities conflict with its tactile qualities, or vice versa.

It is clear that in saying the foregoing I accept with qualifications the basic assumption underlying Rear's evaluation of sculpture, viz. that *generally speaking* the more senses a work of art stimulates in a *satisfying* manner, the better it is as art; assuming that it is the kind of object or activity, etc., that is by nature capable of stimulating two or more senses. The following are two main relatively specific qualifications we must add in order to render this 'principle', as I abstractly qualified it in the preceding italicized passage, more acceptable.

(1) In some of the greatest art the stimulation of more than the characteristic sense or senses can interfere with and so diminish the work's effectiveness. Alternatively, it may be simply irrelevant to it as art, adding nothing to though also taking nothing away from the work's effectiveness.

This can be clearly seen, I think, in the case of such supreme works of art as J. S. Bach's 'Mass in B Minor' and 'St. Matthew Passion', Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, 14th and 15th quartets, and Piano Sonatas Nos. 30, 31 and 32, *King Lear*, the *Divine Comedy*, Michelangelo's *David* and *Moses* and his *Pietà di Palestrina* in the Gallery of the Academy in Florence, and the *Laocôon* group in the Vatican Museum.

(2) A 'law of diminishing returns' probably operates in the case of sense perception. We cannot assume that the more senses are involved in the perception of a work of art the richer or deeper is the resulting experience of qualified perceivers bound to be, particularly if we include smell and taste among senses. For instance, imagine the effect of inhaling incense (or perfume?) while gazing at Michelangelo's *David* and listening to live music being performed on an instrument or a chamber ensemble in the towering shadow of the statue. Real or imaginary examples can be multiplied almost indefinitely. This raises the whole issue of the relation of different kinds of art to one another, as objects of aesthetic perception and enjoyment: the subjective and objective conditions under which they reinforce or enhance one another's impact by their co-existence, and under which they do the very opposite. But we cannot go into this matter here.[45]

REFERENCES

[1] *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1, Fall 1969, pp. 79–90.

[2] Cf. also *The Concept of Art*, Chapter 2.

[3] 'On the Nature of Painting,' in *Art and Philosophy*, edited by W. E. Kennick (New York, 1964), pp. 224–25.

[4] 'The Art of Sculpture,' *op. cit.*, pp. 226–38.

[5] What Read does is logically different in important respects. See Section III.

[6] This does not mean, nor do I maintain, that no modifications of any kind in these concepts are ever warranted; e.g. broadening them in various directions with the creation of new kinds of artifacts utilizing physical surfaces or bodies as (or as among their) media, and claiming to be paintings, sculptures or works of architecture. The only essential proviso is that all such modifications should preserve the open and non-essentialist character of these concepts. It is the particular kind of modification —broadening or narrowing down—of these concepts effected or in effect proposed by the aestheticians in question or by other 'traditional' aestheticians, that I find uncalled for. It is hoped that the discussion of the latter kind of modification in this essay will help us see more clearly the difference between the two kinds of change, their implications, and the reasons for them.

[7] It is this thesis, or at least the first of it, with refinements, that Wittgenstein denies (in *Philosophical Investigations*) respecting many ordinary expressions and concepts. In 'Family Resemblances and the Classification of Works of Art' and here, my view is that Wittgenstein's view applies, with certain important qualifications mentioned in that essay and in *The Concept of Art*, to the art-

names or art-concepts we are concerned with.

[8] Actually this thesis goes—must go—further, and claims that all things which *in future* are (*correctly*?) called paintings, or sculptures, etc. *would* possess these putative features. This predictive (or prescriptive?) element in the putative universal synthetic statement 'All paintings (sculptures, etc.) possess such-and-such qualities' often goes unnoticed when aestheticians defend the present, empirical essentialist thesis regarding a particular art-form as a whole. For one thing, it is difficult to justify without falling back on the semantic thesis, (1), stated above. The same is true with regard to other non-technical concepts, in other universes of discourse, which are considered essentialist concepts.

[9] Trapp, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

[10] I shall pass in silence over the difficult problem of which A-features, if any, are (*a*) perceived by sense as opposed to mentally, and (*b*) which of the former, if any exist, are perceived with the eye as opposed to tactually.

[11] Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 217.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 218.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] We also say 'X lacks all meaning'.

[16] Cf. the analogous distinction relating to music, discussed in 'The Identity of a Work of Music' *Music and Man*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1973.

[17] *Op. cit.*, p. 216. Cf. also pp. 216 ff. on paintings, pastels, sketches, studies, mosaics, collages, etc.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 216.

[19] *Op. cit.*, p. 226. Italics in original.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 227.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 228. Italics in original.

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 231–2. Italics in original.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 231.

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 235.

[26] Actually, he is not perfectly consistent in this respect; since at one point (*ibid.*, pp. 231–2) he thinks of the third characteristic of sculpture, namely the provision of tactile qualities (or D_3 as I shall refer to it) as distinguishing sculpture from painting. This shift or vacillation is significant from the standpoint of my non-essentialist view of painting and sculpture.

[27] Cf. my remarks in Section II respecting the relation between Trapp's putative differentiae, (*a*) and (*c*), of painting.

[28] But as I said before, he is uncertain about this.

[29] *Op. cit.*, p. 232.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 230.

[31] *Ibid.*

[32] 'Architecture as Space,' in Kennick, *op. cit.*,

[33] See *op. cit.*, p. 234 f., in relation to Read's discussion of Rodin's sculpture.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 232.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 233.

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] The same is true of collages; but these we may not wish to classify as paintings, though they are not sculptures either.

[38] Read does not explicitly say this; but his general position appears to imply it. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 232.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 233. My italics.

[40] For an interesting critique of Read's conception of sculpture as distinguished from painting, and the theory of visual perception on which Read attempts to base it, see Donald Brook, 'Perception and the Appraisal of Sculpture', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Spring 1969, pp. 323–330.

[41] This phenomenon has been widely commented on by linguistic philosophers, in relation to traditional attempts to offer real definitions of this or that art-form. Cf. e.g. Beryl Lake's discussion of Croce's and Bell's putative definitions of art, in *Aesthetics and Language*, edited by William Elton (Oxford, 1954), pp. 100–13, and W. B.

Gallie, 'Art as an Essentially Contested Concept', *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. VI, No. 23 (April 1955), pp. 97–114, as well as Morris Weitz's 'The Role of Theory in Aesthetics', *passim*.

[42] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 232.

[43] *Op. cit.*, p. 229. Cf. also p. 232, and pp. 236–7.

[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 231–2.

[45] I have discussed this matter briefly, with regard to visual art, in my 'Optimum Conditions of Visual Art', *Dianoia*, 1973.

THE PHENOMENOLOGIST AS ART CRITIC: MERLEAU-PONTY AND CÉZANNE

Michèle Bate

'LES HOMMES normaux possèdent la vérité de leur art sans la science', Merleau-Ponty says. It is generally agreed that this does not matter in the case of technicians, craftsmen or even artists, the 'vérité' of whose skill is learned by imitation and intuition and then transmitted to others by a similar process. 'La compétence discursive', as Merleau-Ponty puts it, however, is indispensable in those whose business it is to recognize the 'savoir faire' of others and to make rational and explicit what is normally intuitive. It is indispensable, obviously, in the art critic, especially that art critic who hopes to recognize and account for the new discoveries made through the medium of painting (or sculpture) which might otherwise go unnoticed, even by other artists. Merleau-Ponty has written very little on painting and sculpture as such, though what he has said is certainly of interest to the student of Fine Art, for it can be taken as an example of the 'rationality' as distinct from 'intellectuality'—the distinction is crucial to an understanding of Merleau-Ponty's work—of that rare creature the competent critic.

Merleau-Ponty's most interesting piece of art criticism is his essay 'Le doute de Cézanne' reprinted in *Sens et non-sens* (Paris, 1965), and it is with this essay that the student of art will be chiefly concerned. But before looking at it in detail it is necessary to remind ourselves of the movement of ideas from which Merleau-Ponty's work derives, in so far as it is relevant to the work of art. Briefly, as is well known, the tendency of twentieth-century psychology and epistemology has been to reject the view that experience is passively undergone, that the mind is a *tabula rasa* on which sense impressions are imprinted and in which they combine to make up complex ideas, as in the psychology and epistemology of Locke and Condillac. One of the problems with which followers of Locke and Condillac wrestled, namely how does a merely passive, receptive mind come to demonstrate volition and intention, has come in our time

to seem of paramount importance. We have all heard of the *Gestalt* school of psychology. Today, one could say, perception is seen as simultaneously passive *and* active. All sense data, it is commonly argued, have meaning (erroneous or otherwise) in so far as they are consciously experienced at all and they owe their precise form to their context, to our preoccupations, our presuppositions and, as Merleau-Ponty puts it, to our particular *projet*. 'Tant que je veille, j'ai toujours des intentions touchant l'avenir et je suis toujours en train d'agir avec intention—conscience est conscience d'intention.' The carpenter's tool does not look the same to the man who does not know how to use it as it does to the craftsman himself. As Merleau-Ponty points out, a wheel lying on the ground does not *look* the same as a wheel bearing a load. And Professor M. D. Vernon expresses what now seems to be a widely accepted view: 'quite apart from the physiological limitations on vision, we are as a rule concerned to perceive only as much as will enable us to identify what we see, that is to say, to allocate it to a particular class of objects or shapes, with which we are familiar' (Vernon, *The Psychology of Perception*, 1963[2], p. 52).

One critic who has been strongly influenced by this view is Professor E. H. Gombrich, who as an art historian sees the history of art as a process of continuous developing experiment, analogous to the history of science in some respects (though in his later criticism, e.g. *Meditations on a Hobby Horse* and *Form and Norm in the Renaissance*, he has come to emphasize more its symbolic and expressive aspects). In *The Story of Art*, 1950, and *Art and Illusion*, 1960, he sees successive artists over the centuries as working towards a closer approximation to the truth, which is external to the artist in so far as it is not yet attained. Speaking of Constable, for example, he writes:

'He thought, and rightly, that only experimentation can show the artist a way out of the prison of style towards a greater truth. Only through trying out new effects never seen before in paint could he learn about nature.' Merleau-Ponty resembles Gombrich in that both reject the simplistic view of perception as merely passive and art as merely the imitation of passive impressions. 'Painting is an activity and the artist will therefore tend to see what he paints rather than to paint what he sees,' says Gombrich in *Art and Illusion*, 1968[3], page 73. Merleau-Ponty differs from Gombrich, however, in regarding the 'truth' not merely as something the artist may see as missing from previous paintings (like the actual colours in a landscape as opposed to the conventional gradation from brown in the foreground to blue on the horizon of eighteenth-century landscape, which Constable rejected) but as a necessary postulate of experience *in any man*. In any man the belief that what he sees truly

exists is present in the act of perception and hence determines the nature of the perception itself. It is in this sense that the 'visible' includes the 'invisible' and that one's glance or gaze goes beyond what would be seen by a merely receptive retina or what is imprinted on the film of a camera:

> La perspective vécue, celle de notre perception, n'est pas la perspective géométrique ou photographique: dans la perception, les objets proches paraissent plus petits, les objets éloignés plus grands, qu'ils ne le font sur une photographie, comme on le voit au cinéma quand un train approche et grandit beaucoup plus vite qu'un train réel dans les mêmes conditions. Dire qu'un cercle vu obliquement est vu comme une ellipse, c'est substituer à la perception effective le schéma de ce que nous devrions voir si nous étions des appareils photographiques: nous voyons en réalité une forme qui oscille autour de l'ellipse sans *être* une ellipse (*Sens et non-sens*, 1965[5], p. 23).

Merleau-Ponty is following the implications of what has been realized many times before—and many times forgotten—of what is stated, for example, by La Fontaine in *Un animal dans la lune*:

> Pendant qu'un philosophe assure
> Que toujours par leurs sens les hommes sont dupés
> Un autre philosophe jure
> Qu'ils ne nous ont jamais trompés.
> Tous les deux ont raison: et la philosophie
> Dit vrai quand elle dit que les sens tromperont
> Tant que sur leur rapport les hommes jugeront;
> Mais aussi, si l'on rectifie
> L'image de l'objet sur son éloignement,
> Sur le milieu qui l'environne,
> Sur l'organe et sur l'instrument,
> Les sens ne tromperont personne . . .
> Quand l'eau courbe un bâton, ma raison le redresse:
> La raison décide en maitresse.
> Mes yeux moyennant ce secours,
> Ne me trompent jamais, en me mentant toujours.
> (*Fables*, VII, xviii)

Like La Fontaine, Merleau-Ponty sees this process of discovery and re-creation as a normal and rational process, not as the highly specialized process of trial and error which for Gombrich characterizes the history of art. And it may be significant that Gombrich's best work is that which he has devoted to the tradition of realistic representation from the fifteenth to the end of the nineteenth centuries, a period in which a Charles V will pick up a Titian's brush and in which the painter is exalted as a 'master' and 'genius'. For Merleau-Ponty creativeness is what characterizes every man and woman, which helps to account for some of his attractiveness

to writers such as Simone de Beauvoir, Sartre and the intelligentsia of the Left.

The difference between the two critics is most apparent, however, if we look at what each has written about Cézanne, who lived for most of his life without public recognition and in whom Merleau-Ponty seems to have been more interested than in any other painter. Gombrich tends to speak of Cézanne in terms similar to those used by Cézanne's first admirers in France and England, who with certain of his later landscapes and letters in mind* thought of him as the forefather of Cubism and hence of 'Modern', i.e. abstract, art. Roger Fry, for instance, in *Cézanne. A Study of his Development* (1927), characterizes Cézanne's way of painting as follows:

> . . . the actual objects presented to the artist's vision are first deprived of all those specific characters by which we ordinarily apprehend their concrete existence—they are reduced to pure elements of space and volume. In this abstract world these elements are perfectly co-ordinated and organized by the artist's sensual intelligence. (p. 58)

Writing about a still life, not a landscape, of Cézanne, Gombrich states:

> Cézanne had chosen his motifs to study some specific problems that he wanted to solve. We know that he was fascinated by the relation of colour to modelling. A brightly coloured solid round such as an apple was an ideal motif to explore this question. We know that he was interested in the achievement of a balanced design. That is why he stretched the bowl to the left so as to fill in a void. As he wanted to study all the shapes on the table in their relationship he simply tilted it forward to make them come into view. Perhaps the example shows how it happened that Cézanne became the father of 'modern art'. In his tremendous efforts to achieve a sense of depth without sacrificing the brightness of colours, to achieve an orderly arrangement without sacricing the sense of depth—in all these struggles and gropings, there was one thing he was prepated to sacrifice if need be—the conventional 'correctness' of outline. He was not out to distort nature; but he did not mind very much if it became distorted in some minor detail provided this helped him to obtain the desired effect. (*The Story of Art*, pp. 412–13.)

Whether or not this corresponds to the way in which Cézanne worked, it certainly does not correspond to his own claims in his correspondence to be pursuing 'un idéal d'art, c'est à dire une conception de la nature'. Writing to Émile Bernard in 1905 he insists on 'L'obstination que je

* His favourite advice to other painters in later life was 'Il faut traiter la nature par le cône, le cylindre et la sphère'. Its application can be seen in the last canvas he painted (*Le Cabanon de Jourdan* (1906)) and the paintings of Braque and Dufy, both entitled *L'Estaque*, both painted in 1908.

mets à poursuivre la réalisation de cette partie de la nature, qui, tombant sous nos yeux, nous donne le tableau. Or, la thèse à développer est—quel que soit notre tempérament ou puissance en présence de la nature—de donner l'image de ce que nous voyons, en oubliant tout (ce) qui apparu (sic) avant nous'. And it is this intention, as expressed in Cézanne's correspondence and realized in his art, on which Merleau-Ponty insists. The development even of Cézanne's later work is described 'non comme l'incarnation de scènes imaginées, la projection des rêves au-dehors, mais comme l'étude précise des apparences . . .' (*Sens et non-sens*, p. 19). Merleau-Ponty, too, draws our attention to the 'distortion' of perspective in the still lifes:

> Les assiettes ou les coupes posées de profil sur une table devraient être des ellipses, mais les deux sommets de l'ellipse sont grossis et dilatés. La table de travail, dans le portrait de Gustave Geffroy, s'étale dans le bas du tableau contre les lois de la perspective (*Sens et non-sens*, pp. 21–2), and De la même façon le contour des objets, conçu comme une ligne qui les cerne, n'appartient pas au monde visible, mais à la géométrie. Si l'on marque d'un trait le contour d'une pomme, on en fait une chose, alors qu'il est à la limite idéale vers laquelle les côtés de la pomme fuient en profondeur. Ne marquer aucun contour, ce serait enlever aux objets leur identité. En marquer un seul, ce serait sacrifier la profondeur, c'est-à-dire la dimension qui nous donne la chose, non comme étalée devant nous, mais comme pleine de réserves et comme une réalité inépuisable. C'est pourquoi Cézanne suivra dans une modulation colorée le renflement de l'objet et marquera en traits bleus *plusieurs* contours. Le regard renvoyé de l'un à l'autre saisit un contour naissant entre eux tous comme il le fait dans la perception. (*Sens et non-sens*, p. 25).

It is not a 'relation of colour to modelling' with which Merleau-Ponty is concerned in his essay on Cézanne, but with the totality of perception which his painting exemplifies:

> Cézanne ne cherche pas à *suggérer* par la couleur les sensations tactiles qui donneraien la forme et la profonduer. Dans la perception primordiale, ces distinctions du toucher et de la vue sont inconnues. C'est la science du corps humain qui nous apprend ensuite à distinguer nos sens. La chose vécue n'est pas retrouvé ou construite à partir des données des sens, mais s'offre d'emblée comme le centre d'où elles rayonnent. Nous *voyons* la profondeur, le velouté, la mollesse, la dureté des objets,—Cézanne disait même: leur odeur. (*Sens et non-sens*, p. 26.) Les recherches de Cézanne dans la perspective (we are not surprised to read) découvrent par leur fidélité aux phénomènes ce que la psychologie récente devrait formuler. (*Sens et non-sens*, p. 23.)

Merleau-Ponty's work, while paying homage to the marvellous 'précision' of Cézanne's 'étude des apparences', leaves certain questions still unresolved. That the eye does not register the geometrical perspectives reproduced in a photograph or in a painting by Brunelleschi or Masaccio

may be true. But a flat canvas is not a human eye and the eye cannot see its own perceptions. The unpopularity of Cézanne during his own lifetime and the incomprehension of the public, and even of many admirers such as Roger Fry, suggests that the ordinary man did not recognize his own way of seeing in Cézanne's paintings and felt more at home with photographs or with paintings resembling them. Are the paintings, then, on which Cézanne laboured in so much agony no more than an ingenious *trompe l'oeil* which can give the illusion of reality only to a few? Why, moreover, should he have laboured so hard in order to recreate as a painter a process which, according to Merleau-Ponty, is that known to every man or woman in whom sight is unimpaired?

To answer these questions it is necessary perhaps to take into account more than Merleau-Ponty does the history of visual reproduction and to remind ourselves that, far from being a 'primitive', Cézanne was a highly sophisticated artist reacting against certain traditions of art and at the same time reaching out for certain qualities that he found in the work of the past—the order and balance, for example, of the art of Poussin. The student of Cézanne may do well, in other words, to adopt something from Gombrich's approach to art as well as that of Merleau-Ponty.

Merleau-Ponty's approach may none the less be of use to art historians and critics even if he does leave certain questions unresolved. Firstly, because of his emphasis on intentionality as part of perception and intentionality as expressed in time. This may lead us to explain our experience even of the so-called abstract work of art; in so far as it succeeds in arousing by its repetition of line or blocks of colour certain expectations which lead the eye forward; or in so far as it leaves the eye disconcerted, unable to know where to begin its exploration or towards which point to move. It can account for the paradox, on which Merleau-Ponty often insists, that the painting exists both inside and outside time, or to use a common metaphor (which with Merleau-Ponty's work in mind ceases to be a metaphor) of the inanimate painting being either 'dead' or 'alive'. Secondly, because of his insistence on the role of the body as *subject* as well as an object of perception, his reaction against the delusions of 'intellectuality', his reminder of the singleness and unity of experience, which only in theory, never in fact, can be separated into the data of different senses. 'On m'a parlé d'un avegule qui connaissait au toucher quelle était la couleur des étoffes' (Diderot, *Additions à la lettre sur les aveugles*). Some of the arguments of Merleau-Ponty are not perhaps all that new. Some of them are put forward in a hypothetical form in the *Lettres sur les aveugles*, but their implications are pursued by Merleau-Ponty in his

study of Cézanne in particular much further than by Diderot in his *Salons*. Diderot's contemporaries, of course, were Greuze and Watteau, and his genius as a critic lay particularly in his study of character as revealed in portraiture. Diderot had no Cézanne among his contemporaries. The 'science' conveyed in the work of Merleau-Ponty has had to wait for the 'vérité' of Cézanne.

KRACAUER: THING, WORD, AND INTERIORITY IN THE MOVIES

Jerome Stolnitz

IT DOES not instance the fallacy of imitative form to observe that much that has been written in the aesthetics of the moving picture is about as jejune as most of its subject-matter. Those early theorists who sought earnestly to rise above the level of highfalutin fan-magazine talk often lacked the requisite conceptual sophistication; those who drew upon the literature of aesthetic theory tended, naturally enough, to assimilate and sometimes force the new medium into old categories. The portentous question: But is it art? inhibited both sorts of writers. Their work was, with sporadic exceptions, unrewarding, even embarrassing. And it could not produce a stable framework of problems, and the tools and vocabulary for their analysis, within which alone inquiry could fruitfully proceed. As to the achievements of moving pictures themselves, the classic defence—the argument from their infancy—is no longer available. It is false chronologically and, less trivially, in light of the Golden Ages—the 1920s and the period of world-class director stylists initiated by Italian Neo-Realism. More current defences evidence the at best volatile and uncertain quality of movies. Thus the critical transvaluation on which a movie is so bad that it is, somehow, good; the despairing disregard of aesthetic value in favour of sociological examination; the isolated shot or vignette which, if it does not redeem everything, at least counts, if only by contrast, for almost everything. Perhaps, then, I should avow my own summary evaluation of the movies (something neither I nor anyone else would dream of doing in essaying the aesthetics of, say, painting). I would adapt Justice Holmes's remark about the classics of literature: 'Let us admit that they are boring and then start making exceptions.' I would, in the case of the movies, use a more stringent but less subjective epithet than 'boring'; the likely exceptions I have just noted.

I now invite your attention to Siegfried Kracauer's *Theory of Film*.[1] For Kracauer—a refreshing rarity in this field—is capable of reflexive attention to the pivotal concepts of his theory, without which they can

hardly engage or merit serious concern. He attempts to unfold the meanings and ramifications of these ideas and he is, on the whole, sensitive to their limitations. Moreover he carries out a sustained deployment of his ideas on a scale uncommon in this literature. Like other movie aestheticians Kracauer had a life-long love affair with moving pictures, which developed in him an acute sense of how profoundly this medium differs from the more traditional arts. Kracauer is not, however, given to uncritical adulation. He knows how much in the history of the movies has been contrived, noisome, puerile.

Since it is my purpose to trace the structure of Kracauer's theory and to bring out some major strengths and weaknesses of the theory, I will differ, sometimes radically, from him. But at least, for the reasons just given, I think this a book worth disagreeing with. I think also that Kracauer's categories give a purchase on the subject-matter, making it tractable to analysis even for those who take issue with his conclusions. The book has a further, considerable merit, particularly for someone unfamiliar with the field. Though Kracauer's theory is very much his own, it draws on many of his most estimable predecessors[2] and thereby provides entrée to the literature.

One terminological note: Kracauer, like most recent theorists and critics, designates the medium 'film'. I incline, rather, to the old-fashioned name 'moving pictures' (or 'movies'). For this terms hits off with perfect aptness and concreteness precisely what we see and respond to aesthetically. Film is what gets shipped in cans and is then placed in a projector. Even when the film is being run and it is true to say, materially, that we are seeing film, it is not, surely, typically true to say that we are aware of ourselves doing so. We are watching pictures, which move.

I. *Thing: Theory of Film* details the unique capacities of the medium and then proceeds to a normative standard, which judges movies in terms of their relative fulfillment of these capacities and calculates the response to movies in terms of the audience's implicit sense of these capacities. Thus Kracauer explicates the distinction, ubiquitous in film theory and criticism, between the 'cinematic' and the 'uncinematic'. His explication is probably faithful to what is mutely intended by many of those who avail themselves of the distinction, though Kracauer by contrast does not consider the meaning of the distinction self-evident, or its authority self-vindicating. He applies it across a broad range of movies of diverse periods, styles and *genres*, only some of which will be singled out in this paper.

'Film . . . is uniquely equipped to record and reveal physical reality and, hence, gravitates toward it' (28). '[Films] are true to the medium to the extent that they penetrate the world before our eyes' (ix). The notion of

'revealing' and 'penetrating,' *i.e.* disclosing what is not obvious, raises some questions to be considered shortly. But at least the medium 'reveals' by bringing before us and fixing attention upon what is utterly familiar in the visual world. The camera can show the remote, the exotic, the spectacular; it can, by such devices as the close-up, distend and transform commonplace objects into unrecognizable abstract shapes. Yet these are not the whole or even the largest share of what the camera discloses. We are—in both senses—compelled by it to see what we look at every day without seeing.

Yet 'physical reality' would be, for purposes of the analysis, a vacuous concept if it comprised anything whatever that can be photographed. It would then, too, be useless as a normative criterion. Kracauer therefore specifies, perceptively, those features of physical reality to which the camera 'gravitates' (60 ff.). Such reality is familiar in the further respect that it is raw, 'uncontrived', not constructed in a way that makes its construction for the sake of the film manifest. Therefore though any given movie shot is framed and thereby segmented, it carries with it the powerful suggestion of the 'endlessness' of the physical world that lies beyond it. Further, because 'camera-reality' is unstaged and endless, the camera can and often does happen upon the 'fortuitous', viz. the unplanned, unpredictable occurrence. This need not be rejected; it is often seized upon. And always physical reality is changing, moving; in movies 'nothing is more essential than the transitory' (151). The endless, restless flow of a job lot of uncontrived material objects and events is epitomized in the city street (72–73, 255).

Has Kracauer in specifying the concept narrowed it unduly? He puts it that movies are 'uniquely equipped' to deal with physical reality, to which they therefore 'gravitate'. Both phrases are dispositional; the claims they make require a different line of argument. The former calls for us to remark the capacities and limitations of other vehicles of visual presentation and depiction. Painting, as closely tied to its model, if it has any, as it may be, creates or constructs its visual content. The stage setting, whether for drama or for the dance, is largely painted and always demarcated from 'its real-life environment' (29). Whether literally or by the proscenium, it is circumscribed and its action thereby set apart. The still camera, by contrast, can display material objects *in propria persona*. So too the movie camera, except that both they and it can be continuously mobile. Hence it can, distinctively, roam over the real-life environment of which the things presently seen are a part, in principle 'endlessly'. Hence it can like no other medium record physical motion and energy. The second line of argument is from the historical evidence of the capa-

city's actualization. Such early 'photoplays' as Bernhardt's *Queen Elizabeth* (93; cf. 216–17) photographed stage dramas with a static camera. 'Opening out' the play has since been the almost universal practice, even in filming markedly hermetic plays (*e.g. The Caretaker*). Similarly films of ballet performances inveterately move away from the position of even the best seat in the house, sometimes disguising or evading the limits of the stage-setting. In more usual movies there has been a marked, largely successful effort towards reducing the contrast between the fixity and artificiality of the set and the location. As it traverses material things the camera chances upon and welcomes (the decision to retain) ephemeral, unforeseen physical phenomena as in the shot, seen by Kracauer when a child and which 'never left' him (xi), of the breeze stirring a puddle of water. We might instance the sudden, accidental fall of the mountain goat in Buñuel's *Land Without Bread*. This is a startling but fairly extraordinary event. The shot recollected by Kracauer is typical of what Balázs calls the 'thin hail of small moments of . . . material life' (quoted, 225), with which movies of almost any *genre* or style are interspersed. The salient evidence here is not documentaries, though these are not irrelevant, but rather the usual film of fiction, even those which place a premium on abstract and psychological themes. They make a clear, it may be awkward and strained attempt to include even a 'thin hail of material life'. Notably the city street has been a staple, as widely used as any, since Griffith. Even if the street is not the site of the action, the camera meanders into and roams the street.

It is obviously metaphorical to say of material rawness, endlessness, etc., that: 'It is as if the medium were predestined (and eager) to exhibit them' (41). Yet within the metaphor there is, I believe, a testable position. The two lines of argument support each other. Movies preponderantly shun the constructed, which seems to be such, the circumscribed and the fixed.

Still, even if we come to accept the position, it seems clearly to give us far too little to work with in analysing moving pictures. Are movies devoted just to roaming over a stretch—any stretch—of physical reality, as defined, and nothing more? (But is it so certain we would not watch such pictures?) What Kracauer calls 'the realistic tendency' (another dispositional phrase) described above is not the whole story. The 'formative tendency' (6, 11–12, 35–6) seeks a coherent whole which will be beautiful, dramatic, . . . This whole is unified by a story-line in a broad sense that encompasses fiction and documentary. Now to fulfil the formative tendency need not and often does not satisfy the realistic as well. The tension between the two is endemic to movies. Very often the exploration of material things is suppressed or distorted in the narrative, thematic or conceptual interests of the formative tendency. Such 'uncine-

matic' movies are not 'true to the medium' and for that reason lack 'aesthetic validity' (12, 37, 40).

Kracauer's formal defence of this position does not go through, a failing not uncommon among 'purity of the medium' theorists, whose sensibilities often out-run their arguments. Kracauer's use of such phrases as 'aesthetic validity' and 'aesthetic legitimacy' (38, 40) indicates that uncinematic movies are not inferior in value but rather just not aesthetic at all. Taking 'aesthetic' in some fairly uncontroversial, garden-variety sense, the position is dubious on its face and Kracauer's own remarks undercut it. Uncinematic works may be highly 'beautiful' and 'significant' (13, 279); when they possess internal structure they therefore possess 'excitement' and 'emotional intensity' absent from pictorial records of the world that lack such structure (202–3). But these are straightforward aesthetic evaluations. Unsurprisingly, then, the meaning of 'aesthetic' turns out not to be straightforward. Indeed, though this needs to be teased out of the book, the meaning turns out to be—with consequences for the above thesis that are clear enough—'faithful to the medium'. Thus Kracauer cites the movie version of *Death of a Salesman* which, it was held by most critics, 'goes against the grain of film'. Kracauer uses his own terms, viz. the movie is devoid of 'aesthetic legitimacy'. Yet he grants, apparently quite consistently with what he means by these terms, that movie-goers appreciated 'the very virtues' enjoyed by theatre audiences (38). These virtues likely include dramatic conflict, emotional power, etc. Such virtues will not be relegated to the non-aesthetic, least of all by fiat.

Kracauer's normative thinking is, however, far less peremptory than the triviality to which the above thesis reduces itself. It is clear from the passage just referred to from pp. 202–3 that the realistic tendency is not itself a sufficient condition of goodness. Indeed it does not exist in isolation from the formative. Everything depends on the 'balance' between them (148; cf. 16). Further, since these are 'tendencies', they permit of indefinitely many modes of actualization. The one 'minimum requirement' set forth by Kracauer is that the formative tendency 'does not try to overwhelm the [realistic] but eventually follows its lead' (39).

There are, clearly, questions of meaning and therewith of first-order application that we need to pursue. We are encouraged to do so by the fact that a great deal of movie criticism has found both direction and flexibility in Kracauer's position. We ought also to be encouraged by an ancillary argument suggested by Kracauer. This is that not only does the medium possess the unique 'affinities' (60) which he details but also that its audiences bring with them a sense of these capacities. Expectations are thereby created whose frustration is felt as a disvalue and a ground for

negative judgement. The spectator's 'awareness' of the limitations of the still camera precludes the tacit demand in viewing photographs for the flow and fullness of 'the world in motion' (134). Movies which do not live up to this demand [induce] claustrophobia in the viewer' (233), who must always feel the 'inexhaustible' (Laffay, quoted 78) that is open to the camera just beyond the given scene. Studio sets fail unless 'the spectator feels he is watching events which might have occurred in real life and have been photographed on the spot' (34; cf. 60). Such passages, which are relatively few and far between, do not spell out a replacement for the fallen definition of 'aesthetic'. Yet they are, so I believe, insightful and they intimate a relational conception of aesthetic value that might be used to test 'the minimum requirement'.

Before we can proceed, however, there is another 'affinity' of the movie camera I have not yet mentioned. This is the feature of physical reality which counts most with Kracauer. He reverts to it probably more than to any other across the length of the book. He places it at the heart of the distinctive aesthetic appeal of the movies.[3] It is also, unhappily, the least clearly explained of the 'affinities'. The notions of endlessness, fortuitousness and the unstaged are fairly easy to understand, which does not diminish our debt to Kracauer for bringing them to light. Not so 'the indeterminate'. Even if my strictures on it prove well taken, this concept is Kracauer's attempt to explain one of the most singular facts about movies, a fact which nobody recognizes and celebrates more than Kracauer, viz. the extraordinary fascination exerted by things, even quotidian things, even such things not shown at unusual angles or in strange contexts. Balázs,[4] Eisenstein (63), Jean Epstein (70) and countless anonymous movie-goers testify to the power of material objects which may appear only briefly in a movie and remain in memory long after the rest of the movie is forgotten. Kracauer sums up pungently his view of the medium in the words, 'films cling to the surface of things' (x). Yet the explanation is not found in surfaces merely. Things possess 'multiple indeterminate meanings' (20, 68–9). What are these meanings?

Kracauer gives too many answers. He says first of these meanings that they are 'liable to touch off various moods, emotions, runs of inarticulate thoughts' (68). Doubtlessly things can do so, though this fails to differentiate them from other entities, such as concepts. Kracauer goes on: '. . . in other words, they have a theoretically unlimited number of psychological and mental correspondences' (68). It is not clear how the meanings are related to the correspondences (are they the same?). It sounds as though the meanings are simply cues or triggers to any—'theoretically unlimited'—psychological state in the viewer. If the relation is thus random, how can

one speak of 'correspondences' at all? Yet Kracauer elsewhere takes a different line. He considers their meanings 'inherent' in things (208). He says of physical objects cited from various movies, '. . . we feel that they desperately want to impart to us an important message' (257)—a phenomenological truth which Kracauer transposes into an ontological speculation. The message cannot be articulated precisely: hence 'indeterminacy' or 'vagueness' (20). But their meaning(s) is the 'substance' of these things (257), which endows them with 'an individuality and a glamour all their own' (277). An inherent meaning is a considerable distance from a promiscuous psychological trigger. Again, even if vague, what are these meanings?

M. The child who is to be the psychopath's next victim has not returned home for lunch. Her mother calls the child's name; the camera rests on the empty stairwell and the rudimentary place-setting on the table. There will be no dispute from those who know the movie about the great 'sadness' (122) of these objects. Just as indisputably their sadness is not 'inherent'. It results, in context, from the mother's 'despair', as Kracauer points out (122) and also, clearly, from the viewer's knowledge of what is happening to the child. So here we do have a meaning specified, but it is not that of the physical thing itself except as this is true of any instance of the pathetic fallacy and therefore not inherent. Kracauer does not specify any other meanings of the things.

Elsewhere, too, Kracauer seems to abandon 'inherent meaning'. He says of the windmill in Pudovkin's *End of St. Petersburg* that at the very start of the film it 'means nothing in particular and therefore means everything' (70). Only as the plot develops does it take on meaning, like the things in *M*, from the plot.

Our question about 'meanings' is not answered in Kracauer's discussion of *M* or anywhere else. And yet this classic scene in a classic movie illustrates and supports Kracauer's more general and more coherent position. Is the merit of the 'Elsie'-scene explained by saying that the formative tendency has 'followed the lead' of the realistic? On the above the answer is 'Yes', since things themselves tell the story at this point, 'No', because they can do so only contextually. But Kracauer's phrase is probably not sharp enough to work with. Indeed, taken anything like literally, the phrase hardly makes sense. Only the formative tendency, with its rhythmic or narrative or documentary purpose, provides a lead to the camera. Take, therefore, the more felicitous, though still somewhat vague, statement of 'the minimum requirement'. The physical objects in the 'Elsie'-scene are not 'overwhelmed' by formative demands. They are integral to the narrative—the child has still not returned—and to its expressive

significance. Accordingly the camera keeps going back to them. The stairwell and place-setting become large and vivid; their details stand out; their being is irresistible. They are anything but backdrop. Neither do they have the 'purely decorative function' (268) which Kracauer, as ever insistent on the claims of camera-reality, derides in uncinematic movies which resort to diversionary photogenic shots. Neither are they spliced in *ab extra*, to manufacture a simile (cf. 126, 208), like the shot of the ox in the abattoir, cross-cut with the bodies of the strikers, at the close of Eisenstein's *Strike* (an example Kracauer does not but could give). Nor are they used like the Eiffel Tower in the hackneyed 'placing' shot, which, because it serves only to identify Paris, is not perceived 'for its own sake' (118).

A tenement stairwell and a child's place-setting—here are things, simple and prosaic as can be, that the camera dwells upon. They further the formative development; yet their nature is not scanted or manipulated, as in the cases just cited. Isolated by the frame, preserved by the sustained shot, accentuated by the very absence of the movement which at this time of the day usually surrounds them, their presence and characteristics are perceived, not, strictly, 'for their own sake', but as intently as though they were.

Kracauer's treatment of *On the Waterfront* diverges from the enthusiastically favourable critical consensus. He acknowledges the movie's 'semi-documentary' strivings, but judges that they fail:

> Every shot . . . is calculated to enhance the dramatic impact of a contrived intrigue. There is no air about these shots. True, they let in material reality, but they do so only to drain it of its essence. Reality itself is here employed to build a universe . . . hermetically closed. . . . (223).

So far as Kracauer connects 'essence' with 'multiple meanings' (223), I would not be disposed to consider further this criticism or the entire passage, were it taken to rest on these notions. Instead it will be more profitable, once again, to read the passage in light of 'the minimum requirement'. Let us take critical opinion to create a strong presumption on behalf of the movie. Then either some weakness in Kracauer's general position will be disclosed or, alternatively, in his account of this movie's particular properties.

Note first that it can equally well be said of the luncheon shots in *M* that they are 'calculated to enhance dramatic impact'. This does not, we have found, keep things from asserting their presence; if anything, the opposite. *Waterfront* does not come to rest on objects like the 'Elsie'-scene, but that makes it the more typical case. The waterfront environment functions, rather, as the setting, the emphasis throughout being, as Kracauer points

out, on 'the actors and their inter-play' (223). Indeed in two scenes that have been highly applauded (the dialogues in the tavern and in the rear of the taxicab) this emphasis becomes exclusive. These scenes, particularly the taxi scene, are 'hermetically closed'. But what of the movie as a whole? Conspicuous in the critics' reason-giving is their endorsement on Kracauer's own grounds. The realistic camera not only 'lets in' the environment but also preserves its look and feel. The docks, the run-down little park across from the church, the rooftops, the taverns—their coarse, bleak, gritty texture is caught with remarkable precision. And the presence of that texture contributes formatively. It is requisite to our understanding of the personal and social tensions with which the movie is chiefly engaged. These result from the impulses both to remain within and to break out of the environment. The material objects in *Waterfront* are not employed as tags or similes or decorative excrescences.[5] They are not 'overwhelmed'. And the 'affinities' are markedly realized. The settings are or have the look of being unstaged; the fortuitous, *e.g.* random events in the street (the park, the dockside) and the action of wind and water, appears; Kracauer's criterion of endlessness, *i.e.* the viewer must believe that moving the camera in one direction or another will disclose still more physical reality rather than stage-hands in the wings, is pretty certainly satisfied.

The two dialogue scenes I have mentioned are not, still going by the testimony of criticism, 'claustrophobic'. The extraordinary power of the acting, abetted by the closedness, renders them phenomenally intense rather than confining. Across the breadth of the movie physical reality, with 'an individuality all its own', is palpable. Kracauer pays needlessly the price of rejecting the received evaluation.

Finally (of course), *Potemkin*. Kracauer contends that, along with silent film comedy, *Greed*, *Grand Illusion* and films of like stature, *Potemkin* is clearly cinematic in his sense (302). But whereas on *Waterfront* Kracauer claims too little for his theory, on Eisenstein's masterpiece he claims too much. It is correct to say of the sailors' revolt and the Odessa steps sequence that they 'embody' rather than 'illustrate' the 'action' or 'intrigue', unexceptional that they '(quiver) with life' (226). In these now canonical scenes the formative tendency has compacted the energy of physical objects and movements. But Kracauer goes on:

> Not forced to lend color to given story lines, the rising mists in the harbor, the heavily sleeping sailors, and the moonlit waves stand for themselves alone. They are part and parcel of the wide reality involved. . . . They are largely purposeless; it is they and their intrinsic meanings which *are* the action. (226; italics in original)

This passage assimilates the scenes it mentions to the revolt scenes. In doing

so the term 'action' has skidded. The 'action' of the movie, as Kracauer first refers to it, is, say, the uprising and the response of the citizenry to it. The night scenes are not this action or, in any important way, elements of this action. To put it vulgarly, the action would remain if they were dropped from the movie. The reason this is vulgar is precisely that they are not 'purposeless'. The nocturnal intermezzo is integral to the tempo and mood of the film. The intermezzo could have been attempted in other ways than sustained, loving images of the natural world. Camera reality is assuredly not 'overwhelmed' here, any more than elsewhere in this, therefore highly cinematic, work. But it only blurs Kracauer's position to say of every image of camera reality that it '*is* the action'.

I return to 'intrinsic meanings' only because Kracauer does so. He discusses 'the famous close-up [illustrated in the book] of the surgeon's pince-nez dangling down the ship rope' (226) after the doctor has been thrown overboard by the mutineers. This shot—graphically, heavily, exclusively physical, like those in *M*—like those forwards the narrative, *i.e.* the doctor's death. This meaning, accruing from the plot, is clearly not intrinsic. 'But,' Kracauer says, 'the haphazard tangle, rich in contrasts, of materials—part rough, part fine—is also significant in its own right; it carries various implications . . .' (226–7). As before, Kracauer fails to spell out any of the 'implications'. There is one that does not seem extravagant. The pince-nez, fragile, exotic by contrast to the ship rope, perhaps effete, can fairly be taken as a symbol not only of its owner, but also of his class; the massive, sturdy rope, of his revolutionary foes. This symbolic antithesis is grounded in the 'contrasts of materials' to which Kracauer aptly alludes. Yet it obviously also rests on the plot and on matters of ideology beyond the plot. The close-up brings out arrestingly the look and feel of physical things. But these are surfaces. It does not bring out their intrinsic meanings. They have none so far as Kracauer has given us any reason to believe.

Yet this is, I hope to have shown, *pace* Kracauer, the lesser side of the coin.

II. *Thing and Word:* Though the lugubrious contemporary predictions of the cinematically fatal effects of introducing sound have been rendered *curiosa* in, and by, history, it is not antiquarian to deal with Kracauer's dictum, thirty years later, ' . . . attempts at an equilibrium between word and image . . . are doomed to failure' (103). For the tension or even implicit opposition between word and image has been and remains, as much movie criticism shows, a problem endemic to the making of talkies and one of the major axes of their aesthetic analysis and evaluation.

Words are bearers of conceptual meanings, which are not denizens of

the material world. Kracauer does not spell out sufficiently the peculiarities of such meanings and why they therefore resist cinematic handling. Yet whatever the causes, the problem breaks out in the immediacies of viewing. Dialogue creates 'patterns of meaning' which 'assume a reality of their own' (104). Because they solicit the viewer's attention, they '(interfere) with the photographic reality to which the camera aspires' (104). Conversely, arresting images threaten grasp of the specificity and complexity of linguistic meanings. The tension appears in another form. It is obvious but not trivial that the word requires speakers, either actors or commentators. The only exception would be the occurrence of printed words on the screen, either an insert, like those of the silent film, or by scanning a book, letter or diary. The latter device is used infrequently—itself a noteworthy fact—and very shortly becomes 'obtrusive' (242). Otherwise the actor necessarily becomes prominent. Now the human being is itself one sort of physical reality. 'Cinematic action is always likely to pass through regions which, should they contain human beings at all, yet involve them only in an accessory, unspecified way' (97). With dialogue the human being cannot be 'object among objects' (97). Language detaches the actor from the physical realm, its very employment being, perhaps, the crucial *differentia*. In this way, too, speech tends to 'exile inanimate nature to the background' (104).

Kracauer's analysis gains more point if we come down more heavily than he does on the viewer's implicit sense of the camera's natural 'affinities'. It is the frustration of this tacit expectation that has rendered 'talky' a peculiarly pejorative term in movie criticism.

Kracauer's normative thesis in this area uses the terms of 'the minimum requirement'—the visuals must 'take the lead' (103). The phrase is still vague or otherwise unsatisfactory. If it is clarified by what Kracauer takes to be the paradigm cases of his thesis, it is much too narrow. He cites the dedication scene at the beginning of *City Lights*, in which the orations are sounded gibberish (107–8). Also *Pygmalion*, which in the phonetics scenes 'is cinematic because it alienates the words' (109). Clearly, these sequences, in which language is decomposed or obliterated, are highly atypical of sound movies. So too the Tati comedies (109).

As before, let us take 'the minimum requirement' to be that camera reality is not 'overwhelmed'. The requirement is certainly met by the comedies (*e.g.* Sturges) cited by Kracauer that 'counterbalance' witty dialogue with slapstick visuals (104 n.) and thus, it would follow, refute his dictum concerning the impossibility of 'equilibrium'. Short of this ideal, there are recurrent techniques 'to reduce', as Kracauer says, 'the weight and volume of the spoken word' (106) and at the same time to

reinstate the physical. The most elementary is to move from the speaker to the object or scene, remote as it may be, to which he is referring. Kracauer puts clearly the difficulty when the word does not simply denote the thing: 'Visual stopgaps become inevitable whenever dominant speech ventures into unpicturable dimensions. The reason is obvious: as the speaker proceeds, something has to be put on the screen, yet nothing visible really corresponds to his words' (210). Thus the documentaries and historical movies in which complicated, often abstract social or historical discourse is synchronized feebly with visual concretes. Further, conversation can be dimmed or blurred so that it edges towards the incomprehensibility of the movies just mentioned. Kracauer cites René Clair (106–7); a later example is *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*. Or the dialogue, while audible, is detached from the speaker and heard over scenes of the natural world which he is not describing (*A Thousand Clowns*, Molly's soliloquy in *Ulysses*). The tension described by Kracauer then reappears.

I will select from Kracauer's complex, detailed handling of this issue one fairly small *genre*, viz. movies of tragedies. They are especially instructive here since 'the weight and volume of the spoken word' are antecedently so great. Kracauer brings to bear several of his major insights to support the *prima facie* hazardous claim that ' . . . film and tragedy are incompatible with each other' (x).

Kracauer uses 'tragedy' in the limited, classical sense (265) so that its looser, watered-down meanings are avoided. In that orthodox sense tragedy resides in personal character interacting with external events, the working-out of this casual relation issuing in a dénouement that completes and closes the world of the action. Such tragedy deals with the human as other than a physical being; nothing could be more alien to its concentration and closedness than 'the camera's ingrained desire for indefinite rambling' (266); accidental events can occur, but absorbed into the causal linkage, not as objects of independent and, relative to the plot, diverting interest. Kracauer cites in the Olivier *Hamlet* the 'conspicuously stagy Elsinore' (36), only accentuated by the incessant camera movement. That movie also exemplifies the centrifugal pull of the visuals and the poetry (105–6).

Let us go to a post-Kracauer movie, Brook's *King Lear*. Lord Birkett, in his account of the making of the film, which he produced, records with endearing ingenuousness the finding that ' . . . although one can find images which may seem appropriate . . . sometimes images become unnecessary or even unwanted—they can actually get between the audience and the power of the words'. 'The power of the words' is attenuated in several ways in the movie: the text is severely abridged; the poetry is

rendered flatly, prosily or prosaically; it is often fractured or obliterated by non-verbal sound or camera business. The abridgement can be justified by the inordinate length of the complete text (though narrative clarity is lost in consequence). The style of delivery can be justified by the over-all interpretation which, nihilist as it is, rejects the reality of personal and social values and therefore their grandeur. But it is perfectly clear that Brook, like Olivier, seeks to avoid a photographed stage play. Hence the style is also an effort towards the typically cinematic casual, light, everyday speaking which reduces 'the weight and volume' of what is said. That a price must be paid need not be argued; its magnitude, given the poetry in question, would take some calculating. But language is not only deflated; it is dislocated by camera movement. The cuts away from the speaker subvert semantic coherence; the back of the speaker's head is shown; the words are detached from the speaker and transposed to a landscape that is pictorially striking and therefore, for the reason given by Kracauer, a mixed blessing. Such techniques take over the scene on the heath, in which language is overcome by the tempest and electronic sounds, a speech is punctuated by the screen going blank after each line, the camera picks out macabre and obscure objects; all is disjointed. Let us say that the king's dementia is thereby put visually. Is the storm scene just that—a depiction of madness? Even on an absurdist interpretation? Last, and anything but least, is the language of the storm scene the least significant language of the play?

Critical response to this movie was highly mixed. On one point, singularly, the critics were agreed. The camera realizes vividly material things and their textures—the weathered but still durable animal hides, timbers, metals, the chilled, bleak landscape, the desolate shore.

III. *Thing, Word, and Interiority:* This is a crude Anglicization of the French *intériorité*, the 'inward being' (235) of feeling, thought and desire, their interaction, and the stabilization of these states in traits of character.

The medium's endemic difficulty with words and its coping—lightening, diverting from, minimizing, obliterating, ignoring words—are closely tied to its further difficulty in rendering interiority. 'A composition in words . . . is able and therefore disposed directly to name and penetrate inner-life events . . . ' (237). Kracauer does all too little to explicate the point. What is there about language that enables these disclosures? What are the salient differences in this area between words, which are not iconic, and images? Yet Kracauer takes the decisive first step. In very considerable measure interiority eludes the medium. Movies ape the drama at the mortal risk of talkiness, and the novel with its non-dialogue verbal description and analysis of 'inner-life events' at no less risk (*e.g.* the off-

screen voice). At one point Kracauer ventures that 'most of mental reality admits cinematic representation' (270). But this claim is made just once; it rests on the dubious doctrine of psychological 'correspondences' (cf. 263); and it is not borne out by Kracauer's intensive examination of concrete cases (chaps. 13, 15). In its grossest form the effort towards 'cinematic representation' invites the kind of judgement rendered by Virginia Woolf on a contemporary film version of *Anna Karenina:* 'A kiss is love. A broken cup is jealousy. A grin is happiness. . . . None of these things has the least connection with the novel that Tolstoy wrote. . . .'[7]

What is lost in Brook's *Lear* is not only the poetry but also, for that reason, the complexity, mutations and nuances of character. On the classical view adopted by Kracauer the tragedy is in the conflict of purpose and behaviour within the hero and in his interaction with others. But his inner being, this 'mental entity of momentous significance' (265), demands for its articulation 'language-bound meanings' (268, 238). If these are allowed their full voicing, Brook's practice shows, the realistic tendency is jeopardized. In this movie, in fact, camera reality is relished in the respect already mentioned and in others, e.g. the numerous shots, between dialogue scenes, of movement and transportation (a clear instance of the addiction of movies to such scenes, early noted by Panofsky (224)). Yet when physical reality vies, as it often must, with the language, and when it is subjected to gimmicky manipulation as in the storm scene, it too is 'overwhelmed.' For tragedy, however, it is the failure—the obscuring and flattening-out—in delineation of character that is decisive.

The achievement of filmed tragedies generally is at the least dubious, so much so that one who would reject Kracauer's dictum on theoretical grounds must face up to this evidence. It is even less arguable, and equally instructive, that many of the medium's supreme achievements are in comedy. Here material reality takes a large role even to the point, in both sound and silent movies, that the actors themselves become things, 'objects among objects'; the world is not defined and enclosed; language is either supererogatory or, in the talkies, characteristically light, quick, crisp, brittle. Kracauer's position can be developed helpfully here. Interiority need not come in at all to unquestioned comedies that are successfully cinematic (*e.g.* slapstick). When it does, the states of character are rudimentary, uncomplicated, generic. By contrast to tragedy, but also to less exalted *genres*, the working of feeling, purpose and belief upon each other is not ramified. And, again in utter contrast to tragedy, character, such as it is, does not change. I have worked out this argument in an earlier paper, discussing Charlie, the best-known movie comic figure.[8] Interiority of such narrow dimensions need not be 'language-bound'. Much the same is

true of melodrama, which Kracauer couples with comedy on other grounds (272).

The likeliest place to deploy and test Kracauer's view of the relations between thing, word, and interiority is in films of the last two decades which explore interiority with a sophistication new under the cinematic sun. I choose, again post-Kracauer, the Rohmer *Contes Moraux*.

Everyone agrees that these four movies are among the wordiest ever made, though the minority negative opinions take just this to be the chief objection. Rohmer employs some of the devices previously noted, *e.g.* the voice of the invisible speaker over a natural setting. More typically, however, the camera is planted in front of the speaker or else rests upon the listener for—relative to most movies—inordinately long stretches, most notably in the protracted conversation that begins at dinner table in *My Night at Maud's*. The talk, moreover, carries out the examination of feelings and motives which is at the centre of all the 'tales'. Rohmer explains that he uses 'moral' as opposed to 'physical', *i.e.* concerned with character rather than external events. He defines a 'moral tale' as 'a story dealing less with what people do than with what is going on in their minds while they are doing it'. The challenge was that: 'You had to violate cinema, even if films have an inborn aptitude for documentary.'[9] We are not, of course, constrained to accept either the artist's statement of his programme or his theorizing (the closeness of the theorizing to Kracauer is apparent). The evidence internal to the movies is, however, constraining.

Without exception these movies fall into the category Kracauer calls 'the episode', 'a set of events having distinctness . . . in a larger series, as in one's life . . . ' (251). These events are 'strung together' (253), sometimes by accident. Such stories 'emerge from, and again disappear in, the flow of life . . .' (251). The events of *La Collectionneuse* and *Clair's Knee* occur within vacation interludes, the protagonists being acquaintances or strangers who meet in transit. *Chloe in the Afternoon* deals with a casual encounter between a rootless girl and a lawyer, at loose ends in the off-moments of the afternoon; Maud and the protagonist meet a few times until they run into each other briefly in the coda, five years later. The episode is of people drifting together and drifting apart. Unlike all tragedy, drama generally, and a good deal of novelistic literature, the events, such as they are, in the Rohmer movies are not pivotal or climactic in the lives of the characters. This is, indeed, the reason some critics, otherwise favourably disposed, speak of the slightness or inconsequentiality of these movies.

The episode-movie admits, even invites, physical reality. The camera luxuriates in the villa and its surroundings, water and sun (*Collectionneuse*),

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the Swiss Alps and lakes (*Claire*), the frozen or slushy streets of the provincial city at Christmas time (*Maud*), and Paris (*Chloe*). Indeed one can hardly find in film history many better examples than *Chloe* of a movie of the city streets—their bustle, randomness, mutability. Physical characteristics of the un-stagy interiors are also pointed up, *e.g.* the wall-paper and upholstery which are conspicuous presences during long conversations in *Collectionneuse* and *Claire*. It is remarkable how, for all their talk, their physical environment never falls away from the Rohmer people.

So far, taking together 'the minimum requirement' and the helpful category of the 'episode', the Rohmer films are cinematic, in Kracauer's terms. Now what of the talk?

As much as its profuseness the critics have called attention to the literateness or even literary-ness of the talk. This may carry with it a discouraging moral concerning the general level of movie dialogue. For though the Rohmer people are intelligent and articulate, and their conversation anything but vapid, neither is it especially deep or incisive. Language is used primarily to describe interiority—the speaker's feelings and attitudes. Lucid and witty as it is, the dialogue does not have the profundity that arrests and earns attention, or the conceptual and imaginative suggestiveness of poetry (*Lear*). The debate over Pascal (*Maud*), which would seem to be very deep waters for a movie, is, it can safely be said, not markedly technical or abstruse. What Kracauer calls 'the weight and volume of the spoken word' are never ponderous. This is natural, quotidian talk, whose exchanges flow easily, *andante*. We should note, too, the varied tempos created by the editing, notably in *Claire*, and of course the quality of the acting.

Because the talk does not cut deeply it delineates a fairly uncomplicated character. The protagonist in each of the *Contes* is very largely the same man, viz. one who entertains the possibility of marital disloyalty and, by devices of rather priggish self-delusion, rejects it. Thus his 'fortress of morality' (*Collectionneuse*) is preserved. He is, as this description suggests, a gently comic figure. If he does not see through his pretences, we do. The intense earnestness with which he wraps himself into the chastity belt of the blanket in order to resist Maud is affectionately ludicrous. Not that it matters, which makes it more ludicrous. He has disqualified Maud by his resolve to marry only a girl who is both a Catholic and a blonde. Indeed he is certain he has already found the girl, though he has not yet spoken to her. He does not waver in this resolve or even allow himself to challenge it seriously. From this standpoint, indeed, a good deal of the talk, specifically including the debate over Pascal, whom the protagonist calls 'irrelevant', does not very much matter either. It does not and cannot

alter a character which is, however sweetly, inflexible ('my choices are always simple'). He meets, accidentally, the girl who is both a Catholic and a blonde. That she is in no other respect superior to Maud underscores the stubbornness of the resolve which the protagonist has maintained from Vancouver to Clermont.

He is, if anything, more absurd in *Claire's Knee*. If the to-do over touching the knee were not itself sufficiently silly, this act is set against a violent summer storm, the background for how many emotional crises in the movies. Moreover the protagonist, who had earlier expressed his aversion to the exercise of will, justifies his deed by calling it 'an act of pure will' and also, for the reasons given in the narrative, a morally good deed. Ensuing scenes show the latter claim to be false and inane. *Claire's Knee*, like all of the Rohmers, is a gently quizzical comedy of character, a character that is uncomplicated and that never develops.

Two critics generally enthusiastic about the *Contes* both remark that Rohmer remains on the 'surface'. I have no idea whether they were thinking about Kracauer. That is less important than the pertinence, even to these highly wordy, highly introspective movies, of the acute, two-edged insight that is at the heart of *Theory of Film:* 'films cling to the surface of things'.

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[1] New York, 1960. All page references in the text are to this book.

[2] Among these are Panofsky, 'Style and Medium in the Moving Pictures'; Sève, 'Cinéma et Méthode'; Bluestone, *Novels into Film*; and Balázs, *Der Geist des Films*.

[3] And also the distinctive significance of movies in modern culture, an issue not discussed in this paper. Cf. ch. 16, 'Film in Our Time'.

[4] Cf., above, p. 5.

[5] Cf. above, p. 10.

[6] Quoted in Roger Manvell, *Shakespeare and the Film* (1971), p. 138.

[7] Quoted in Harry M. Geduld (ed.), *Authors on Film* (1972), p. 88.

[8] Jerome Stolnitz, 'Notes on Comedy and Tragedy', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, XVI (1955), 45–60.

[9] Quoted in Carlos Clarens, 'Eric Rohmer', *Sight and Sound*, 39 (1969–70), 7.

BOOK REVIEWS

Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol. The Transi Tomb in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance. By KATHLEEN COHEN. University of California Press. 1973. pp. 215. Plates 122.

'SOUNDS GRUESOME but isn't', our editor said when he sent the book; and indeed one might well expect that a book about tomb sculptures which represent 'emaciated . . . shrivelled . . . decaying . . . corpses' would be a little unwholesome. For this is the way that Mrs. Cohen characterizes the subject of her book in the Introduction (p. 2). But when in subsequent chapters she comes to describe some fifty or more of the two hundred *transi* figures and shroud brasses she has distinguished in north-western Europe, her point of view alters subtly and the starkness of the 'fairly rigid criteria . . . adopted in an attempt to separate the particular iconographic type of the *transi* from similar forms' (p. 9) is softened. There are few specific critical judgements on the appearance of the *transi*, but where there is an actual description the figures are presented as restrained, noble, modest, nostalgic and nude rather than naked; and not only does this less stark characterization seem more appropriate to the *transis* that I know, it is also more acceptable to others. *Transis* seem to evoke a protective spirit. A number of two-tiered tombs that are described have retained their *transis* but have lost other *priant* or *gisant* portraits above, and I am told, though not by Mrs. Cohen, that the grandchildren of the Dean of Salisbury refer to the two *transis* in the north ambulatory of the cathedral as the 'thin men', patting them whenever they pass.

The book poses the problem of the nature of the impact of the *transi* but makes no attempt to examine it. Mrs. Cohen confines herself to description of the tomb structures and to analysis of the texts which are either inscribed upon them or can be associated with them—contemporary sermons, funeral orations, popular and didactic verse and so on—and of the two aspects the analysis of the structures is the less important. Mention of the twelve different types of tomb structure she has found in north-western Europe is confined to the introduction and appendix while each of the six types of imagery she discovers in the symbolism of the tombs and in the inscriptions on them is accorded a separate chapter. Together these six chapters form a chronological sequence which proposes the 'metamorphosis' of the title. She has confined her analysis to what Panofsky has called the iconographical and iconological levels. Although she is clearly familiar with his ideas about the three strata of meaning in works of art—she quotes the two main publications in her bibliography—she chooses to ignore the problems of what Panofsky calls primary or natural subject-matter. There is practically no discussion of the formal relationships existing within the sculptures, no consideration of the way in which the parts relate to the whole, to one another or to any observable reality, and no examination of the shapes from which the sculptures are composed.

The restricted criteria used to characterize the *transi* undoubtedly served a useful purpose in limiting the range of information which had to be presented to a quantity that could be contained in one fairly lavish volume, but they also had less desirable consequences. A tomb figure like the recumbent dressed alabaster of Frances Grey, Duchess of Suffolk, in Westminster Abbey of 1539 is excluded from her account by Mrs. Cohen's characterization of the *transi*. She does not mention it even though the appearance of the figure and the woven rush mat on which it lies indicate a corpse, one who has gone across, because it is clothed in everyday garments. The figure of Thomas Bennet in Salisbury Cathedral dating from nearly twenty years after that of Frances Grey is included in the discussion because he is shrouded, not dressed. The later limestone carving is a taut vibrant figure which Mrs. Cohen calls 'crudely carved . . . and . . . expressive of the deceased's hope of resurrection' (p. 111). It relates to a type of *transi* which she dates as appearing between about 1420 and 1560. The earlier alabaster figure is a more naturalistic work which seems to embody those concepts of secular power and individual glory which she discovers in the final phase of French *transi* tombs. And although this final phase begins with the Royal French tombs finished by 1535, it is difficult to avoid wondering whether such tombs as that of the Duchess of Suffolk were eliminated because they made the historical argument much harder to substantiate.

Nevertheless, the book is a sensitive and fascinating account of the iconology of an interesting category of north-western European tomb sculptures and it is perhaps a pity that the exigencies of writing an historical record of their evolution should hamper the explanation of their meaning. And even though in the English material, at least, there are some exasperating inaccuracies, Mrs. Cohen has written a stimulating basis for further work.

MICHAEL EASTHAM

Wigan and District Mining and Technical College

Etienne-Louis Boullée, Theoretician of Revolutionary Architecture. By JEAN-MARIE PÉROUSE DE MONTCLOS. Thames & Hudson. 1974. £4.50.

BOULLÉE EXERTS a powerful influence on contemporary writers on architecture. The reason may be found in his large designs for buildings of a visionary nature, in which a sense of proportion and harmony prevails in expressing symbols of communal life. He is thus an individualist *malgré lui*, striving for perfection. He was content to execute very little actual building, relying on his numerous students to continue his tradition. He wanted to publish at least two books and to be remembered by his noble drawings of buildings set against a cloudy sky and sometimes in an almost Italian landscape. (He never seems to have visited Italy.)

In this concise book Pérouse de Montclos emphasizes Boullée's early work and summarizes his ideas on nature and the sublime. He suggests Masonic influences, and these certainly pervaded the iconography of the period without necessarily making Boullée a mason. Pérouse de Montclos also suggests influences on or parallelisms with recent architecture, without mentioning any particular sources. Here A. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich* (London, 1970) should be remembered as he explicitly refers to Boullée as an influence. (This is not surprising. Boullée was not unknown to Neo-Classical scholars long before the Nazi period.)

The illustrations of the book are well chosen and convey the scope of Boullée's work. The few footnotes and sparse bibliography have to be supplemented by consulting earlier publications.

HELEN ROSENAU

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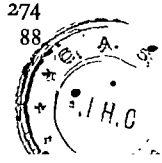
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